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# SURVEY

a journal of East & West studies

## The Soviet Scene

Robert F. Byrnes Robert H. McNeal
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## Brezhnev the Writer

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## Soviet Dissidents

Valentin Turchin Ludmilla Alexeyeva

## Marxism

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**Editorial Office**

Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, London W1R 1TD (Tel. 01-734 0592)

**Subscription Office**

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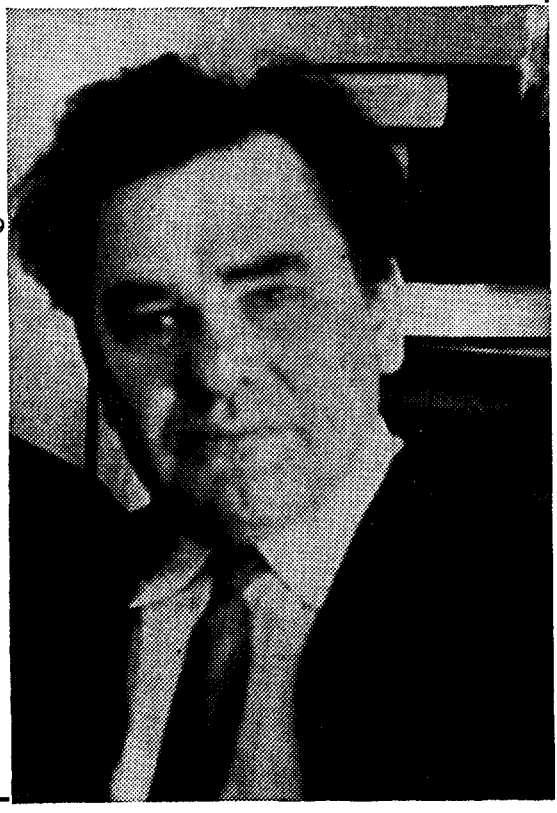
# Petro Grigorenko
# My friend Mykola Rudenko

'Tell an average Soviet person that a member of the Communist Party, political instructor during the last war, prominent Soviet Ukrainian poet and prose writer, chief editor of the literary journal DNIPRO, secretary of the party organisation of the WUU, has of his own free will turned his back on all of this; that he came into conflict with the CC CPU on matters of general state policy, which did not directly involve him; then joined Amnesty International and set up the Ukrainian Helsinki monitoring group, knowing full well that he would end up in prison for this—and the average Soviet person will not believe you.' Grigorenko knows Rudenko as friend, poet and defender of human rights. In this essay (in **Index on Censorship** 1/79) he describes Rudenko's background, his interests, personality and works.



Roy Medvedev writes in **Index on Censorship** 2/79 on 'The Future of Soviet Dissent'

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# Moscow Revisited: Summer 1978

**Robert F. Byrnes**

IN the mid-1930s, the *New Yorker* published an essay about the experiences of a young lady trying to educate her upper middle-class fourth-grade students about poverty. The essay illuminates the difficulties Western observers face in trying to comprehend the Soviet system. The teacher, a woman of great goodwill, discovered that her charges, who lived in elegant homes and were driven to and from school by chauffeurs, did not realize that the United States was in the midst of a great depression, that 12,000,000 men were unemployed, and that dire poverty gripped millions. In fact, none understood the meaning of the word poverty or the character of the lives many American children then had to endure. In her progressive school she therefore devoted a six-week period to the study of hunger, poor housing, hopelessness, and other misfortunes which the depression had multiplied. She had her fourth-graders read news stories about especially tragic incidents, showed them slums, bread lines and empty factories, and rubbed their noses into the grim facts of life in the depression.

The first essay she read dismayed her. It throws light upon the problem we all face: that of understanding another culture, even when saturated with abundant information. It was entitled "A Short Story about Poverty," and began: "Once upon a time there was a poor family. The mother was poor, the father was poor, the cook was poor, the butler was poor. . . ."

Today, mountains of material overwhelm Western observers of the Soviet Union. Western governments, especially that of the United States, are as well informed about the Soviet system, its strengths and weaknesses, and its plans as any government in modern times has been about its rivals. Our military, intelligence, and political leaders may indeed possess more information than they can assimilate or comprehend. In some ways Soviet leaders are as candid as Hitler was in outlining their strategies and tactics in dealing with those whose support they command and those whom they seek to undermine and destroy. Moreover, the flood of scholarly analyses published by well-trained Western scholars is more than even the most determined specialists can absorb. Indeed, one of the most important changes of the last 20 years has been the vast increase in information and careful analysis of the Soviet Union and its affairs. Western specialists have even on occasion obtained access to Soviet materials previously denied to them by demonstrating that their careful analysis

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of published information had already made them as well-informed as responsible Soviet officials.

We do not lack knowledge. Our problem instead is one of understanding. We encounter the same difficulty which faced the comfortable fourth-graders in the 1930s, that of understanding another culture, plus that of comprehending true believers at a time when we ourselves have no fixed faith or belief. In our case, this failure to comprehend is aggravated by our unwillingness to face reality, by our loss of will or of nerve, and by our eagerness to deceive ourselves about the challenges the world encounters. The Pilgrim Fathers, and Clemenceau, would have understood today's communist rulers far better than we do, simply because they possessed convictions and understood others who did.

Approximately 1,000 American scholars visited the Soviet Union in 1978: the majority of them were men and women engaged in the physical and natural sciences, making a brief "tour of the horizon" as part of the endless travelling and negotiating involved in the joint effort to establish meaningful scientific exchanges. About 100,000 American tourists travelled well-worn red-carpet tours, designed to show them a few Soviet cities at their very best. In return, a few hundred Soviet tourists visited the United States. These numbers reflect quite accurately both the degree of interest in the other country and the freedom to travel.

THE visit my wife and I made in June and July 1978 was my 14th trip to the Soviet Union in 21 years. On our way to Moscow we spent several days in Munich, Prague and Warsaw; on our return we visited Finland, the German Federal Republic and the Netherlands as part of a decompression process. I should mention that I have visited several other East European countries more often than I have the Soviet Union.

On this occasion, I was a guest of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and of its Institute of History, as a participant in the exchange of scholars between the International Research and Exchanges Board and the Academy. I was engaged in research on V. O. Klyuchevsky, the most eminent and popular historian Russia has produced. Klyuchevsky, who died in 1911, was a singularly effective teacher and wrote Russian as Macaulay wrote English. His works have been reprinted in large editions in the Soviet Union, and he is respected and influential. In short, my study involved a scholar acceptable in every way.

We lived almost all of our eight weeks in Moscow in the Academy of Science's hotel on October Square, conveniently located for the libraries and archives in which I wished to work. There we shared experiences and views with a few other Americans—historians, astronomers, nuclear physicists, chemists—and scholars from other

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countries. I spent five or six hours each day except Sunday engaged in research, but my wife and I devoted the remainder of our time to savouring as much of Moscow life as possible. With a Baedeker of Russia in 1914 in hand, we walked through the heart of Moscow in particular, fascinated to learn how much of the nineteenth century had survived. We visited the important museums and art galleries, strolled through the Kremlin gardens, enjoyed the week-day quiet and the week-end fun of Gorky Park, and took advantage of the Metro and of the interrelated bus and tramway systems. We especially valued travelling up and down the Moscow River on its boats, which provide attractive and ever-changing views of the Kremlin, the Novodevichy monastery, the university, and many other buildings and sites which make Moscow in some ways a most handsome city. We ate in most of the well-known restaurants, although obtaining entrance required either eating dinner at noon or persuading the Academy of Sciences or the American Embassy to make a reservation. We celebrated our wedding anniversary and my wife's birthday in Soviet restaurants: our parties were joined by friendly Soviets and became as jolly and festive as only Russian parties are.

As other foreigners in Moscow or Leningrad do, we treasured performances of old favourites such as *Eugene Onegin* and *Swan Lake*. However, we often spent two or three hours an evening watching Moscow television and acquiring insights into Soviet culture and the official Soviet view of the world which Soviet newspapers and magazines do not provide.

I was accidentally " trapped " on the Manege on the morning of the funeral of M. S. Keldysh, former President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, so that for three hours I was able to observe the way in which the police shut off Red Square, the reactions of the Soviet citizenry, and the pageantry of an official ceremony. All this reminded me of the 1907 funeral of Pobedonostsev, of which I had read, and that of Zhdanov in 1947, which had occurred in the same place and which I had seen on film. Few events illuminate a country and its culture better than funeral ceremonies.

We attended the church of St Louis, the only Catholic church in the city of 8,000,000, appropriately located just behind the Lubyanka and across the street from the KGB headquarters for the Moscow district. There we came to know a handful of young Russian graduate students who were converts to Catholicism and a small number of young diplomats, generally from countries which were once French colonies, and who sometimes preferred (as we did) to attend the church of St Louis rather than the mass at the American Embassy offered by a fine Assumptionist priest who was in Moscow under the agreement by which the United States recognized the Soviet government in 1933. We also met one prominent scholarly member of the opposition, a man of great intelligence and uncommon force and energy, whose

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knowledge of Soviet politics and of international affairs was remarkable. In short, we sought to saturate ourselves in Soviet life.

HOWEVER, our contacts with Soviet citizens, even with scholars I had long known, were limited because of the nature of the system and because the summer of 1978 was a particularly cool time in Soviet-American relations. President Carter's emphasis upon human rights had clearly annoyed the Soviet leaders and increased tension within the Soviet Union and between the Soviet Union and the United States. Soviet and Cuban political and military activities in Africa had increased American criticism of Soviet foreign policy and of the way *détente* has operated to Soviet advantage. The announcement early in June that American officials had discovered an espionage tunnel under the Embassy and the arrest on 12 June of the International Harvester representative, Jay Crawford, both signalled and increased the tension. Later that month, Soviet civil court charges that reporters from *The New York Times* and the *Baltimore Sun* had slandered the Soviet Union caused further irritation. Above all, the summer of 1978 was the summer of trials: Ginzburg, Shcharansky, Nudel, Slepak and others were tried and sentenced quickly by Soviet courts for actions stimulated by and to some degree protected by the Final Act of Helsinki and fully legal under Soviet law. Soviet determination to crush the opposition and all criticism, perhaps to try to ensure that the Olympics in 1980 would be thoroughly quiet, of course frightened Soviet citizens, especially timid Soviet scholars, from even official contact with guests. The Moscow of 1978 therefore closely resembled the Moscow of old, that of Arakcheev, of Custine, and of Herberstein. In spite of the surface changes since Stalin died in 1953, the Soviet system of control remains fundamentally unchanged. Those who lived and suffered under Nicholas I would recognize it easily.

OF course, even a seasoned scholar or journalist can only scratch the surface of a foreign city or country in a brief visit, even if he has immediate and full access to high officials and to all possible sources of information. Nevertheless, our two months in Moscow and Leningrad can provide some interesting insights into the Soviet system and Soviet policies, and can at least raise questions concerning the character of Soviet power, the element of myth or legend at the foundation of the Soviet system, and the puzzling difference between Soviet reality and our view of the Soviet Union.

First, no scholar invited to the Soviet Union could fail to note either the visible restrictions on freedom of movement and on access to published information, or the handicap this places upon Soviet research at a time when explosions of knowledge in all fields make access to new knowledge and the sharing of information absolutely vital. If these controls survive, as they almost certainly will, the Soviet government will continue to strangle itself.

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Second, the ignorance to be found among even educated citizens of Moscow of events within the Soviet Union and of Soviet policy elsewhere is overwhelming, and constitutes, again, a chronic handicap to the Soviet government. No Soviet citizen I met was at all well-informed about the Soviet budget, the size of the Soviet armed forces, the number of Soviet troops in various East European countries and the problems those countries face, or about Soviet policies with regard to SALT, the Middle East, Africa, or other areas of critical concern throughout the world. Indeed, the misinformation poured upon the Soviet population by all the media makes one yearn for old-fashioned ignorance as more healthy.

Third, while Moscow is clearly more modern and attractive than it was 20 years ago, the quality of life, the difficulty of obtaining decent food, the unbelievable inefficiency, the disinterest in working, and the visible brutality, inequalities and injustice make one wonder just how much progress the Soviet Union has made in 60 years. Can the Moscow we see be the capital of a world power? Can the eighteenth-century countryside a hundred miles outside of Moscow, which resembles the Russia of two hundred years ago, support for a very long vast Soviet military assistance to " liberation movements " and foreign governments? Can a vast empire which has fewer miles of hard-top road than the state of Ohio sustain competition with advanced societies such as the United States and Japan? How can one visit the Soviet Union and Japan in the 1970s, with the memories of 1945, and place the Soviet threat to the world in long perspective? How can anyone believe the Soviet Union will catch up with the West, to say nothing of " overtaking and surpassing it "? Indeed, given the nature of the shrinking world and the porous character of all national boundaries to ideas, how long can the Soviet system survive?

Fourth, in spite of the obvious changes, the Soviet Union resembles old Russia not just in the extraordinary survivals from 1914 which Baedeker reveals but in its political system and attitudes. As I sat in the Central State Archives of the October Revolution and examined the police files on Klyuchevsky, a man who contributed long years of utterly loyal service to his state and Church, I could only note the similarities with the Soviet system as chronicled in detail by Zhores Medvedev and others. The new Soviet ruling class, at least those members of it I met in the Academy of Sciences, have far more confidence in Soviet power than they had 20 years ago, and most Soviet citizens have naturally been impressed by Soviet achievements in the economy, in science and space, in living standards, and in international politics. But the government views the citizens with the old mistrust, and the same lack of interest in politics and the same blind loyalty exist as in 1878. Hopelessness persists where change within the system is concerned. In fact, this government, the most conservative in the world, one which exalts the old-fashioned virtues as no other state does, more and more resembles the old regime. Even Prague has more opponents and critics of the

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system than does Moscow, and hope for a freer future is stronger there than in the Soviet Union.

IN many ways, Prague is an excellent introduction to Moscow, for the writ of the Soviet empire runs clearly through that shabby, lovely old city. Brezhnev visited Prague just a day after we left, so the restrictions and controls for which Prague is as famous as it was after the Thirty Years' War were more visible than usual. A man in a green suit took pictures of us and two Czechoslovak friends in the airport lobby from a distance of eight feet, and reappeared in the lobby of the Alcron Hotel when we arrived there. Several Czech scholars whom I had known for a long time, two of whom had suffered for their activities 10 years ago, had the courage to meet us, entertain us, and dine with us. A number of other Czechs whom we met were openly critical of their government and of its economic performance. One acquaintance who signed the 1977 Charter had been beaten up. The same friendly police later delivered a coffin to his apartment as a sign of their continued concern. The police make routine visits on some of those active 10 years ago, interrogate them severely, examine their books, and leave their homes in disarray. Such people are also made to suffer through their children, who are denied access to higher education.

The Czechoslovak Institute of History remains uninterested in reestablishing the fruitful exchange of scholars and books with Indiana University which operated for several years before and after 1968—but I learned that some of its professional staff were transferring to the House of Science, newly established for the purpose of increasing Czech access to Western science and technology. One gathers that Western radios somehow or other bring news to the Czechs and Slovaks, and that underground literature—poetry, novels, memoirs, and even history—thrives. Thus, the magnet of the West with its freedom, its lively culture, its economic achievements, its open effort to resolve its most critical political and social problems exerts a pull stronger than ever in Prague. In short, even a brief visit reveals that Prague, though dispirited, has not been absorbed.

WARSAW is a vastly different corridor to Moscow. Open, effervescent, lively, and stylish, Warsaw seems more Western than ever. The level of knowledge of world affairs is far higher than in Prague or Moscow. The University of Warsaw has an American Studies Center, with several American professors, a growing library, and lively student interest, and its exchange of faculty with Indiana University is flourishing. Although meat in particular is in short supply, Polish restaurants are open, quiet, cultivated. The monument to the Poles in the Soviet armed forces who crossed the river to join the Warsaw Uprising in 1944, while the Soviet army sat and watched the Germans crush the Poles, illustrates Polish nationalism and Polish courage in paying tribute to these loyal sons. Indeed, the evidence in cemeteries of the

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care and affection lavished on the memory of those who fought with the Home Army also symbolizes the power of Polish nationalism.

While we were in Poland, the government ordered managers of large plants to be at work several hours early on the day on which it raised the price of vodka by 25 per cent, in order to forestall any troubles. The government delivers meat each week directly to the largest factories to ensure that workers in these central plants will not demonstrate over the shortages. The "flying university," organized peasant dissatisfaction, the growth of groups interested in defending human rights, the resolute power of the Catholic Church, and the rigidity and low morale within the Party itself—all these factors help make Poland an unstable society. These indications of Polish spirit, together with the attractions the West holds now—perhaps greater than ever before, because of the treaties with the German Federal Republic, Polish knowledge of Western achievements, and Polish resentment of the Soviets—suggest that another crisis, like that of 1970 but perhaps more critical, will break one day.

IN Moscow, the obvious restraints and controls impressed me as the most visible sign of the system. In fact, the restrictions seemed tighter and more effective than on my previous visits. They were most apparent in the way in which Soviet scholars whom I had known for 15 years avoided all contact. These included eminent members of the Academy whom I had met at numerous conferences and entertained in our home, as well as younger scholars whose research interests were similar to mine and with whom I had discussed common problems. I had written several months in advance to these men and women, giving them the dates of my two months in Russia and my Academy Hotel address. I did have a formal meeting with Academician Militsa Nechkina, who began research on Klyuchevsky in 1920 and whom I have known for 15 years, but she restricted our conversation to food, movies, and television, and would see me only once. I participated in a business meeting with several members of the Soviet National Committee for International Historical Activities and a pleasant and candid luncheon with a smaller group from the same committee.

However, another senior Soviet scholar, who had invited me months earlier to give a lecture on Russian studies in the United States, simply disappeared while I was there, as did other Moscow scholars and my closest acquaintance in Leningrad. One whom I had known particularly well and with whom I had corresponded frequently let me know the day I left that he had been unable to see me because his wife had broken her arm. Two Soviet scholars whom we did meet and whom we invited in writing to dinner with us at any time and in any restaurant of their choosing simply failed to respond. On only one occasion did I meet professionally with a Soviet scholar at dinner, and he arranged this on a dark and rainy night with only 30 minutes' notice in conditions that still puzzle us. Our discussions were fascinating, although they were

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similar to those to which we are accustomed in the West, because they ranged widely, from my research to his and then on to world politics, from the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which he admitted, to Soviet-Chinese relations. The remarkable fact is that such a conversation should be remarkable.

My contacts with Soviet historians were thus severely restricted. Soviets are visibly wary of contact with foreigners. A devout Russian who had brought his 10-year-old son to Moscow from Central Asia to show him the Lenin Museum was eager to chat with us as we moved through the impressive collection. However, as soon as we began to look for photographs of Stalin in the illustrations, he left us abruptly. We did nevertheless meet a number of Soviet citizens, many of them scholars or professional men and women, in parks, restaurants, theatres, and museums. These chance encounters, which occurred three or four times a week, were immensely interesting and helped us to begin to comprehend Soviet society. We found these men and women marked by a genuine, powerful desire for peace and by a remarkably warm and deep affection for the United States and for Americans. They were almost without exception satisfied and loyal Soviet citizens, proud of Soviet achievements in international politics and in science, and more self-confident and less defensive about the Soviet system than Soviet citizens I had met on earlier visits. They were much less well informed about their own country and the world than were most Czechoslovaks and Poles whom we met, and they had been deeply influenced by the constant, relentless pressure of the imposed Soviet view of the world, more than they appreciated. We met no one who knew that the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China are still allies. Above all, these Soviets lacked the intellectual curiosity and imagination typical of most educated men and women in other societies. For example, Leningrad is only a few hundred miles from Helsinki and is forever inundated by Finnish tourists. But a 48-year-old Leningrad mathematician with whom we had a long and pleasant dinner confessed that he had not only never visited Helsinki, but that the thought of travel there, or elsewhere, had never occurred to him.

THE restrictions and controls which are so much a part of Soviet life help explain the glaring inefficiency of the Soviet Union. Thus, the Soviet Academy of Sciences accepted me as an exchange scholar 18 months before my visit and knew the dates of my arrival and departure four months in advance. Yet my wife and I had to leave the United States without visas and arrived in Moscow two days late because we did not receive these documents in Warsaw until two days after we were due in Moscow. Moreover, the Soviet government, for reasons which baffle, refuses to issue visas to American scholars except in Washington. The International Research and Exchanges Board therefore had to send a messenger from New York to Washington and then forward the visas through special airline service to Warsaw.

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The delays in our visas symbolize Soviet control and inefficiency. Indeed, the principal words in the Soviet vocabulary are "delay," "in repair," "permit," and "refusal." "They also serve who only stand and wait" clearly applies in Moscow, because one can do virtually nothing nor go anywhere without a permit. This requires standing in line and waiting. In fact, being a member of a queue constitutes my wife's main memories of Moscow, because she spent much of her time in line, shopping, buying tickets, and obtaining permits or reservations.

Someone wrote that everything is funny in a foreign country except the jokes. Similarly, few people in any society willingly accept, or perhaps understand, criticisms of principle of their country or its culture. Most Americans in the Soviet Union long ago discovered the futility of discussing the philosophical or structural weaknesses of the Soviet system with a Soviet citizen. However, I did find that Soviet scholars who had been abroad understood the Western position concerning restrictions and controls when I described my experiences in obtaining access to research materials assured me before I left the United States. These difficulties should also reveal the nature of the Soviet system to Westerners. Most libraries in the United States and Western Europe are open to all students and scholars, indeed to any citizen who comes in from the street. Many American university libraries have open stacks, so that members of the university community and the general public as well can wander in and browse among the books. Many archives, such as the National Archives, are easy of access, if not completely open. Soviet scholars, for example, can without any difficulty work freely in our National Archives, even on material dealing with events after the Second World War.

However, a foreign scholar in the Soviet Union on an official exchange with the Soviet Academy of Sciences quickly becomes acquainted with constraints. Thus, even though the Academy had accepted my research subject and assured me in writing that I could obtain access to each library and archive listed, I needed a specific letter to each institution from the scientific secretary of the Institute of History (ordinarily, according to Soviets, a scholar-administrator who is also a KGB officer) before I could obtain admission. The Manuscript Division of the Lenin Library even insisted that my letter of introduction was not valid because it lacked the appropriate stamp. After I had arrived in Moscow, I learned that the Central State Archive for Literature possessed some Klyuchevsky correspondence of which I had not known. However, I was denied admission because I had not listed it in my original proposal.

Obtaining permission to enter the Lenin Library perhaps best illustrates the controls, the dreadful waste they represent, and the Soviet position concerning access to information. This library is shielded as though it contained only classified data. One of the largest

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libraries in the world, it maintains an office near the sole entrance which grants admission cards, or *propuski*. This office always has three women on duty, so that it employs eight or nine people a week on a full-time basis. Be he a foreigner or a Soviet citizen, the reader is required to present his passport, a small photograph, and a letter from a university or an institute before he can obtain permission to use the library, and then only for a specific period of time. A staff member of the library, with an armed militiaman standing by to defend the library, examines each passport and reader before giving him a card on which other staff members in the appropriate reading rooms write the number of publications used and returned. The scholar must then present the stamped card and his passport to another staff member as he leaves, while the same armed defender observes.

Controls in other libraries are just as careful, although not so elaborate. They symbolize the Soviet position toward access to information. They also reveal one of the reasons why the Soviet Union may have no unemployment.

Admission to a library or archive does not ensure access to the materials needed. Thus, a librarian in Reading Room No. 1, the Professors' Reading Room to which foreign scholars are assigned, sought to deny me materials which she thought unrelated to my research on Klyuchevsky. She relented only when I demonstrated that I needed to see books on the Third Alexander Military School because Klyuchevsky had taught there for 15 years. Similarly, the librarian in the Manuscript Division of the Lenin Library denied an American colleague the right to read the final chapters of an unpublished 1925 manuscript on the social sciences in Russia before the revolution because they were anti-Marxist. No eloquence on his part could persuade him or his colleagues to release those materials. In fact, the archivist sought to deny they existed until he was shown references to them in other publications. Another American exchange scholar doing research on a popular nineteenth-century heroine was denied access to many of her letters—but shown those already published—even though one would think that a scholarly book in English on a revolutionary heroine would have pleased the Soviet authorities.

The Manuscript Division of the Lenin Library now possesses all of the papers of many scholars and political leaders who received shelter from the Masaryk government in Czechoslovakia in the 1920s and 1930s, because the Czechoslovak Ambassador in Moscow, without the knowledge of his government, in 1945 gave the great archival and library collection these men had created in Prague to the Soviet Union as a token of gratitude for liberation. Some of these papers, but not many, are available 33 years later for study. However, many of the publications of these men are not listed in the catalogue of

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the Lenin Library. Thus, the memoirs of historian A. A. Kizevetter are not in the Lenin Library catalogue, although the collection surely contains at least one copy. But that catalogue lists only the official edition of Stalin's collected works under his name—only that.

My inability to spend a day or two in Penza, a small city about 200 miles southeast of Moscow, illustrates these restrictions equally well. Klyuchevsky was born near Penza and lived there for the first two decades of his life. The house in which he lived and the seminary in which he studied still survive. Moreover, the guide to the Penza archives indicates that it contains materials concerning Klyuchevsky. I had tried on a number of occasions to reach Penza, but the Soviet authorities had always denied me permission, even though it is an open city and has direct air and rail connections with Moscow. In 1977, when the Academy accepted me, it assured me that I could visit Penza. Moreover, Penza was written into our visas. The head of the American desk in the Academy of Sciences, the scientific secretary of the Institute of History, and the able and helpful scholar the Institute assigned to assist, all assured me upon my arrival that I could go to Penza. Finally, Academician B. A. Rybakov, an eminent Soviet historian whom I had met at various international conferences, assured me that he would accompany me there to ensure that I saw everything I wished. Yet, in spite of my repeated efforts to make this trip, I did not succeed. Each official to whom I turned resorted to the old Soviet shell game, and asserted that the responsibility lay elsewhere. On my last day, when I noted my dissatisfaction at this breach of the agreement, the Academy official declared that it "was not our decision and not our responsibility." Perhaps so. But how much my inability to reach Penza reveals about the Soviet system.

The Academy's effort to make the archival material available is amusing and symbolic of Soviet controls and waste. The Institute of History sent a Soviet scholar who had studied Klyuchevsky to Penza, where she made a photocopy of each page in the archive on which the name Klyuchevsky appears. Unfortunately, I am not certain that she included all such pages. Moreover, frequent omission of the title page of the documents and the absence of all intervening pages together make these 400 pages an intriguing kind of mystery. And Penza remains a closed city.

SOME Soviet citizens, of course, have a visible thirst for knowledge. In fact, the power of this interest and the limited investment in new library buildings in recent years may help explain why access to libraries is so restrictive. However, access to information is tightly controlled, perhaps even more so than a few years ago. Western radio broadcasting stations with some exceptions, are jammed, in spite of Helsinki. In fact, the Soviet government spends more money jamming

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American broadcasts than we do in broadcasting. Guards on our train in from Poland searched carefully through all luggage for literature. Soviet newspapers and journals, of course, print only what the Soviet government thinks best. In short, we learned that one who relies upon information published in the Soviet Union is worse than ignorant—he is misinformed.

We chose to devote a good deal of our evening time to watching Soviet television, and emerged depressed, almost in despair. We also concluded that some Western scholars should make careful studies of Soviet television and its impact throughout Soviet society. The three channels in Moscow present programmes which resemble those of the United States or Western Europe in format. Their news programmes use several announcers, always including at least one woman. They use film clips and foreign correspondents, and usually end with a weather forecast, which is like ours in accuracy. However, they invariably contain two sections on production in industry or agriculture somewhere in the Soviet Union, designed to show how eagerly everyone is working and how rapidly progress is being made.

Brezhnev was on frequently, giving medals and kisses to cosmonauts, describing agricultural problems and policies, and honouring cities. On 19 June, the opening section showed Brezhnev receiving Mohammed Ali. On 25 June, when millions of Soviet citizens turned on their sets at the prescribed hour to watch the World Cup final between Argentina and the Netherlands, they were treated instead to an hour of Brezhnev, who was also inserted into the period between the halves. I remain puzzled by Brezhnev's prominence, because his speech is so slurred and he has such obvious physical problems. It may be that the regime is seeking to prepare the country for his death by revealing the state of his health. Or perhaps it is trying to reduce concern and speculation by presenting him.

The distortions of the news by Soviet TV are almost beyond belief. Soviet TV describes a world which does not exist and omits that which does exist. It neglects and conceals Soviet policies at home and abroad. The West accumulates anti-government demonstrations and disasters of one kind or another, while all is perfect in the Soviet Union. Soviet TV did not mention the invasion of the Shaba province of Zaire from Angola. In fact, this critical issue reached the Soviet TV public only when French and Belgian paratroopers "invaded." Soviet TV then ascribed the massacres of the whites, whose bodies were shown in piles, to French paratroopers, whom it showed receiving "instant absolution" at mass for the murders they had committed.

A Punch and Judy discussion hour featuring Zanegin, a Soviet specialist on China, and Georgy Arbatov, a member of the Central Committee and director of the Institute of the USA and Canada, informed Soviet citizens about once a week on international politics. This was far from a discussion in our sense, for the two men agreed with each

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other and each made long speeches. Zanegin almost frothed at the mouth about the policies of the People's Republic of China, while Arbatov, in a more urbane fashion, listed the faults and follies of the United States. Both of these men are well-informed and have travelled widely, often in the United States. To hear nonsense from men who know better was truly alarming.

Worse, the Soviet system accustoms its citizens to such deceit and makes them comfortable with it. The masquerade about Penza and the scholar's ascribing his inability to see me to his wife's broken arm fit this pattern. An incident in the Praha restaurant reflects the same approach. We were having lunch with another couple on a balcony well protected by an awning. Suddenly the waiters insisted we eat in a dining room because we would be soaked by rain. As soon as we entered the hall, we realized that part of the building was on fire. However, the fire was soon under control, and the waiters returned us to the balcony, where the awning protected us from a heavy fall of rain. The waiters could not admit that a fire had broken out just a few feet away.

About one third of the programmes on Soviet television in June and July, 1978 were war films, glorifying Soviet military power and heroism and very often making war itself both inevitable and noble. The advertisements for movies indicated that a high percentage of these too dealt largely with war and military virtues. These, and the presence in Moscow and in Leningrad of large number of soldiers and officers, certainly persuade the foreign visitor that the military play an important role in Soviet life.

We found Soviet citizens eager to discuss American politics. Almost everyone had his own view of President Carter and Senator Edward Kennedy. Their knowledge of the complications of American political life was very shallow, although their interest was great. In fact, the attraction of Western life at every level, from fashion to policies, is irresistible throughout Soviet life, and is as strong as Soviet friendliness towards Americans. In every bookstore we visited, the sections which offered Western publications were crowded by eager purchasers, while those which sold publications on the Party, Marxism-Leninism, and international communism were empty. If only we could take advantage of this dichotomy! However, we found only one Soviet citizen, and he an open member of the opposition, even willing to mention Brezhnev's name or to discuss probable developments after his death. Even "licensed" scholars were resolutely unwilling to discuss any element of Soviet political life.

Just as the United States fascinates and charms even the most hostile Soviet citizen, so the People's Republic of China frightens him. My wife and I both noted that almost every Soviet citizen we met within five or 10 minutes began to talk about the Chinese threat, generally in pathological terms. Fear of China is powerful and genuine. The media

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play upon it and fan it, but the fear is real. The Soviets believe that China is an immensely powerful country with nuclear weapons it is eager to use. They fear that vast numbers of Chinese will invade and overrun Russia, as the Mongols once did. They resent what they consider the Chinese destruction of international communism and of the faith that communism would bring peace to the world. Above all, while they consider Americans reasonable and sensible people who will not launch a major war, they believe the Chinese communists are completely irrational and that no one can predict what their actions may be. These attitudes, which are rooted in history, have a great advantage for the regime, providing splendid "justification" for the tight controls and the massive investment in arms.

ANOTHER element of Soviet life which impressed us deeply was the poor quality or low level of living in Moscow, even compared with that in Warsaw or Prague. Moscow in 1978 is of course visibly superior in many ways to the Moscow of 20 years ago. It is an attractive green city in the summer: those responsible for planting hundreds of thousands of trees throughout the city deserve the gratitude of its inhabitants. The refurbished and gilded domes and cupolas of the churches scattered throughout the older parts of the city help explain why those sections are so much more attractive than the endless blocks of more recent construction. Seen from a distance, the Moscow skyline, with its churches and wedding-cake monstrosities is quite handsome. The hundreds of new buildings help give Moscow the surface impression of a fine modern city, and the improved quality and style of Muscovite dress also creates a favourable impression. The flow of traffic and rush-hour jams lead one to believe that Moscow is now a typical modern city. One can readily appreciate why the Soviet government has some confidence that visitors on guided tours will leave thinking Moscow a fine modern establishment.

However, living and working in Moscow and shopping there for food and commodities expose this capital of a powerful empire. This experience also excites some pity for those responsible for the care and feeding of Moscow, in part because the city itself, and everything about it, is too large. The width of the streets, the size of the squares, the distances involved even for a good metropolitan transportation system are simply too great. They not only dwarf the people who live in it, but they create almost unmanageable problems and enormous, continuous, daily waste of time and energy. At the same time, however, as Napoleon III would have appreciated, they provide splendid conditions for the control of crowds.

The quality of life in Moscow makes one appreciate the enormous Soviet investment in armed strength and the imbalance in the use of resources which the government has fastened upon the Soviet people. The citizen and the consumer have been totally neglected. Moreover, the Moscow in which people live and work shows that the Soviet Union remains basically a poor and backward country. Living in it even

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briefly leads one to believe that the Soviet Union does indeed stand 29th in the world in living standards. And of course the difference between Moscow and other parts of the Soviet Union is vast. One has only to compare the achievements of the Japanese in recovering from military devastation to a high standard of living and to domination of some world markets to place Soviet economic advance in perspective.

The low quality of most Soviet buildings is one of the most important indices of the quality of Soviet life. My wife and I quickly concluded that the buildings which impressed us were built long before 1917. These include the structures which house the Manuscript Division of the Lenin Library, the State Historical Museum, the State Historical Library, and the Central State Archive of the October Revolution, all sturdy, attractive, and even elegant. Most buildings only three years old are of shoddy and cheap construction, almost instant slums. One does not need to be a professional architect or builder to notice walls aligned improperly, broken concrete steps, loose tiles, uneven surfaces, and falling blocks. Soviet citizens one meets in restaurants describe the difficulties they encounter in new apartments, where windows and doors do not fit, plumbing does not work, light fixtures fall, walls collapse—and the tenant must pay large sums for repairs before he moves in. Anyone who walks in Moscow must take into account doctors' and hospital fees caused by falls on the uneven walks. The sidewalks are so badly made that rain produces large ponds everywhere, made worse by a grossly inadequate system for draining the streets.

Eating in a foreign country is often a problem. Obtaining food in Russia, even in restaurants in Moscow, was a major difficulty. The stores have plenty of excellent bread, as well as vodka, canned fish, carrots, and cabbage. Russian ice cream, available only from street vendors, is splendid. But beyond that short-list, purchasing food for the kitchen is a full-time and frustrating job. Searching for meat, of low quality at that, fresh fruit, and vegetables at the peak of the summer in Russia's capital and showplace is an eternal scramble. Indeed, my wife found tomatoes only rarely in two months, and at $2 each. One can understand the legend, or the rumours, that the government closed down the Institute of Sociology a few years ago when one of its studies revealed that the average Soviet housewife spent almost 10 hours a week standing in line.

Purchasing a pair of men's garters consumed an enormous amount of my wife's time and in fact became a kind of battle of wits for her, one in which she ultimately triumphed. But this led us both to discover that the difference between the goods in the store windows and those actually on the shelves is like that between the Soviet Constitution and the realities of Soviet political life. Our difficulties in obtaining staples made us rejoice that we had not brought a car to Moscow, for the scarcity of gasoline stations, and the long, slow lines made even tomatoes and oranges seem plentiful.

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Baedeker tells us that Moscow in 1914 had about 20 hotels and restaurants. The number in 1978 is approximately the same, although the city is about eight times larger. Unfortunately, the restaurant and the buffets in the hotel of the Academy of Sciences are both unspeakable. I am puzzled why such a powerful and prestigious institution allows its hotel restaurant to give hundreds of visiting scholars such a dreadful impression.

Most other restaurants are in hotels set aside for foreigners. The pressure on them is so great from the tourists they serve that they deny admission—at their one door—to all those who lack the paper which indicates they reside in the hotel. The October Hotel, in which we lived in Leningrad, would not serve us in its restaurant because it served only large groups of tourists. We therefore had to wait until 10 o'clock for breakfast or gain admission to another hotel. The problems did not end when one entered the restaurant, because service generally is incredibly slow and poor.

In the debate about whether or not Western countries should participate in the Olympics in Moscow in 1980, Soviet ability to house and especially to feed visiting athletes and tourists should be an important consideration. The Soviet government may become the first major government whose survival is threatened by thousands of irate, starving foreigners.

Cleanliness is in many ways a matter of custom and of taste. Moscow has remarkably few diners, so few that they cannot significantly affect foreigners' eating. However, the dirtiness of most of these diners, even those which serve one of my favourite Russian dishes, *pelmennyi*, is such that even the most hungry and casual Westerner can eat there only in trepidation. Hospitals are even worse. Soviet doctors whom we met in restaurants candidly agreed that their hospitals in general had disgracefully low standards, even in elementary hygiene. Moreover, the lavatories even in official places are beyond belief. One must learn to avoid using them, even in buildings such as the Institute of History and the Lenin Library. The women who labour so hard to keep the streets clean should be transferred to the lavatories, which need far more attention. Most visitors must leave Moscow with an unanswered question: why should toilet seats be so rare in the Soviet Union?

THESE aspects of life reflect the absence of initiative and the low level of performance common throughout the Soviet Union, except apparently in those sealed-off sectors which manufacture military equipment and where skills and incentives are high. We were struck by the discourtesy and inefficiency of clerks and of some waiters and waitresses. We were appalled at how slowly construction advanced and at how little workers accomplished. The priests in the only Roman Catholic churches in Moscow and Leningrad both took month-long vacations, even though they had no substitutes and their parishioners were therefore

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left without any spiritual leadership or solace for one-twelfth of the year. These holidays reflect again the Soviet attitude towards one's responsibilities.

We were surprised to note how little Soviet scholars worked, although some are truly dedicated and although a hundred eager students and scholars arrive at the Lenin Library long before it opens, even in the summer. But a society which seals shut many of its laboratories at 5.30 p.m., which places restrictions on many activities of its citizens, and which provides so few incentives to the able and ambitious inevitably pays in the absence of initiative and dedication.

WE were impressed also by the brutality, inequalities, and injustices of Soviet society, greater by far than in any other country we have visited. Americans of course recognize that violence is an important factor in our life, and we are, alas, accustomed to it in our movies and television. Even within the framework of accepted brutality, we were struck by the rough way in which the Soviet police and militia pushed around Soviet citizens, including those waiting patiently to enter the Lenin mausoleum. And seeing the police brutally club into insensibility young men whom they had found illegally purchasing second-hand jeans and records from a foreign diplomats' "garage sale" shocked even hardened foreigners.

The inequalities evident in a system which boasts of equality as a central faith are just as striking. A private receives 3 rubles and 80 kopecks a month, about $5.50 at the official rate of exchange, while a second lieutenant receives 250 rubles a month. The differentials in salary in the academic world are far greater than in the United States: a professor who is also a chairman often receives four times the salary of a colleague, and the emoluments of an academician, relative to those of the average scholar, resemble those of a professional basketball player in the United States, compared to that of a professor.

Above all, the special shops for foreigners, military officers, and the new upper class underline the transparent injustice of the system. In these shops, the ruling few not only obtain food, medicines, clothes, and Western products denied the ordinary Soviet citizen, but can purchase the staples, the basic foods, at prices *lower* than those the ordinary citizen pays in the shops. Thus, the Soviet poor subsidize the Soviet rich.

NO one can visit the Soviet Union today without being impressed by the contrast between Soviet military power and the character of the economy and the system. The genuine national pride over Soviet progress, the satisfaction of those who benefit from the system and the loyalty, confidence—and resignation—of most Soviet citizens provide solid support for the government. Yet the shortcomings are as manifest. The comparisons between life in the Soviet Union and life in all the

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Western states are so glaringly disadvantageous to the Soviet Union that one wonders how long such a political structure can survive. One ponders too how far the West must have fallen in spiritual strength in particular when such a system provides any attraction at all to those outside it. Finally, as one watches these hundreds and thousands of stolid faces, one questions how many mask minds as probing and critical as those of Amalrik, Orlov, Sakharov, and Solzhenitsyn. How deeply have the achievements and the failures of Soviet society bitten into the minds of even the favoured groups? How powerful are historical traditions and loyalties, particularly when fear of China and encirclement are so deep, and so skilfully exploited? Can Soviet man free himself, and us?

LUDMILA ŠEFLOVÁ

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# Number Four, Old Square

**Robert H. McNeal**

THE predominant political position of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union is frequently and loudly proclaimed, yet the Party is curiously reticent about many of the most mundane aspects of its affairs. A case in point is the operational headquarters of the Party, the administrative buildings of the Central Committee. In the capital city of a country where visitors are dragooned into seeing all kinds of public institutions, the effective political centre is ignored by Intourist. The dead Lenin is next to obligatory; the living nerve centre is treated with a reticence bordering on censorship.

True, there is quite legible red Russian lettering, perhaps a foot high, over the main entrance to the headquarters, informing the passer-by that this is the home of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But most of the outside world probably assumes that the Kremlin, five blocks away, is the political centre of the country, and nothing in Soviet publications, television, film or other mass media attempts to convey to the domestic population anything concerning the Party headquarters building.

The original office complex, the only office building of the Committee until the 1970s, is a rather nondescript and cramped group of commercial buildings facing Old Square on the east (the main entrance), Kuibyshev Street on the north and Vladimirov Street on the west (the direction of Red Square and the Kremlin). The main building of the old Central Committee complex, No. 4 Old Square, is an unobtrusive piece of urban architecture. Quite likely it was a bank or insurance firm before expropriation, for this quarter was, according to a Soviet-period guide book, a centre for such enterprises under the old regime. It seems to have been taken over for Party use near the beginning of 1920, when the Secretariat began to expand its activities and moved out of small quarters in the Hotel National, according to Mr. Malvin Helgesen, who is doing research on the evolution of this body. A few, cheap decorative effects attempt to proclaim that it is not a factory. The flat roof line is broken by a false pediment in the centre, flanked by a solid railing and a bit of balustrade. Below the peak the suggestion of columns flanking the central windows on the upper two stories adds to the rather feeble neo-classical impression. A flagpole on the false-front peak flies a plain red flag, not the national flag of the USSR, but a tribute to the internationalist ideology that the Central Committee still tries to represent. This makes a curious contrast with the only other political symbol displayed near the entrance to the building: the park across the street contains not the ubiquitous Lenin

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statue but a monument to the grenadiers who fell at Plevna, complete with Orthodox cross.

The adjacent Central Committee buildings to the north and the building to the rear of the main one, across the courtyard, are only three stories high (two in the case of a small building running along Vladimirov Street) and seem to be a good deal older than the main one. That they house the humbler functions of the complex is suggested by the fact that in 1973 (but not in 1976) one of the doors of this latter structure was labelled as the receiving entrance for the library of the Central Committee. Display windows on the ground floor of these buildings suggest that they were once shops, but the windows are now curtained against inquisitive pedestrians.

What the observer can see at street level is limited. The Old Square side of the complex contains a designated office that issues passes for visitors, as well as the main entrance. Cars, with permission, may pass the uniformed and (rather obviously) un-uniformed guards at the gateways facing north on Kuibyshev Street and east on Old Square. Between my visits to the neighbourhood in 1973 and 1976 polished marble pillars had been added to decorate the gateway on Old Square, just north of the Moscow *oblast'* building.

THIS was a small part of a major rebuilding of the Central Committee complex under Brezhnev's administration. In a country where construction projects are normally publicized to the hilt, this one was executed with the utmost reticence, in keeping with the quasi-conspiratorial character of some aspects of Party activity. Clearly the old quarters must have grown cramped, and they always lacked elegance. That they were not improved until the present decade might be attributed to the fact that none of the chief leaders before Brezhnev seems likely to have made the Central Committee complex his personal headquarters for very long. Lenin worked in the Kremlin and held no position in the Central Committee apparatus. Stalin, when he became General Secretary in 1922 had reason to work on Old Square and may have on occasion, but he had already been located in the Kremlin and all accounts suggest that he normally used it as his headquarters, probably because of its security and prestige. Khrushchev worked in the building on Old Square for several years, but in 1958 became Chairman of the Council of Ministers and probably continued the practice of his predecessors, keeping in touch with Old Square by telephone and by having senior *apparatchiki* shuttle over to the Kremlin. (According to the former UPI correspondent, Henry Shapiro, he interviewed Khrushchev in 1957 in the latter's very large, austere office on the top floor of the old building. At that time, the other secretaries had offices along the corridor leading to Khrushchev's —all very compact.) In contrast, Brezhnev became chieftain of the Party on the express understanding that he would not combine this

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task with chairmanship of the Council of Ministers, though his membership of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet had provided him with an office in the Kremlin even before he became Chairman in 1978. If he aspired to base his career on Old Square, he had ample motivation to build quarters that would be more comfortable and prestigious. Although I cannot say when the decision was taken, it appears to have been in the early 1970s, just at the time when Brezhnev seems to have succeeded in asserting his personal primacy in general. In any case, the new building was nearing completion when I first saw it in March 1973, and has now been in use for some time.

One might think that the logical thing would be to build a new home for the Central Committee on a new site, razing one of the relatively unimportant city blocks near the Kremlin, if central location were important. Instead the planners chose to cram a substantial new structure into the courtyard of the old one. Perhaps the explanation of this inconvenient plan is that it called attention to itself less than almost any other alternative, either in construction or after completion. Even though the new building is substantially taller than the old ones, which surround most of it, it is hard to see much of it from ground level.

If the new building is not a striking example of modern architecture, it is surely one of the most up-to-date and elegant in Moscow. The main body is an elongated, fairly thin slab over twelve stories high, sheathed in a pleasing white marble. On ground level, facing the gateway to Old Square, a stylish, glass-faced foyer juts out from the main body of the structure. Opposite this a windowless box about four storeys high reaches out to Vladimirov Street. Presumably this is the actual assembly hall of the Central Committee. The construction of this new home for the Committee represents a gesture by Brezhnev to the prestige of that body. Previously it had no home of its own. Stalin did not even convene it for many years in the 1940s and 1950s, and Khrushchev in his last years turned the plenums of the Central Committee into a kind of circus, meeting in the new Palace of Congresses in the presence of thousands of "guests" from other organizations. The new hall, suitable for no such throng, is a symbol, then, of Brezhnev's implied promise to the Party elite that they will meet, and in privacy, and in suitably elegant quarters. Characteristically, no mention of the meeting-place of the Committee has appeared in *Pravda*'s accounts of recent plenums. The hall, incidentally, abuts a charming old disused church, dedicated to St. Nicolas, which is white and blends quite harmoniously with the marble of the Central Committee. Did the architects deliberately arrange this ensemble of the old Russian Orthodoxy and the new? Who, in fact, determined that the church would not be razed to give the rather crowded Central Committee a bit more space? It was a fairly obscure church and the political forces involved were quite different from those entangled

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in the dispute over the old churches that were eventually spared when the Hotel Rossiya was constructed a few blocks away.

The new building of the Central Committee no doubt added substantially to its capacity to house staff, but for such an important administrative organization the total complex is still impressively small. The main body of the new structure appears to have 64 windows in each of nine floors between the two lowest stories and the two highest. The layout of the bottom floors is clearly different from the upper part of the building, suggesting special meeting rooms, VIP offices or "public" areas. The top two stories have only small windows and probably lower ceilings, suggesting that low-ranking people, such as typists, toil here. All the windows above the bottom section of the building have a hinged portion on the side that can be opened for ventilation, as some were the day I was there. One probably can conclude that most of the building is not air-conditioned, despite the importance of its function. The windows are about six or seven feet wide, which would make exceedingly cramped offices if the normal module were only one window per office. Some of the office space appears to consist of fairly large open expanses, as suggested by fluorescent lighting extending for five windows, and visible on one floor, but on none of those above or below it in one photograph in my possession. However, it seems that a great part of the office space is divided into offices with windows and extends inward to a central corridor running the length of the building. Windows on the centre-line of the south end of the building clearly indicate a staircase and strongly suggest the presence of such a floor plan. Assuming one responsible worker per module, this works out to a maximum of 576 *apparatchiki* in the new building. Such a simple estimate does not take into account the numerous service personnel who must be needed (typists, stenographers, receptionists), nor the probability that there are some privileged officials who (with their aides) occupy more than one pair of windows. Still the round figure of 500 seems likely to represent something approaching the upper limit of the number of *apparatchiki* in the building, unless one visualizes a really uncomfortable degree of crowding for such august persons. My impression is that 500 *apparatachiki* and the requisite secretarial/technical personnel would be a pretty dense population. Taking the old and new buildings together, I have difficulty visualizing very much more than 1,000 *apparatchiki* in the Central Committee offices, a small force as bureaucracies go.

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# Images of the CPSU: The Views of Jewish Emigrants

**Aryeh L. Unger**

THE emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union in recent years has opened up a new and important source of insight into various areas of Soviet life and politics. In what follows, I shall attempt to draw on this source in order to describe some of the views on the CPSU, its members and functionaries, that appear to be current in certain sections of Soviet society.

The material is derived from an interview project conducted in Israel among a group of 46 former Soviet political activists (*aktivisty*), i.e. lower-ranking part-time functionaries of the CPSU, the Komsomol and trade union committees, as well as a number of other "public organizations," such as electoral commissions, people's control committees, comrades' courts and detachments of people's guards (*druzhiny*). The interview schedule consisted of 180 open-ended questions on political participation in the USSR. The interviews were conducted in Russian and tape-recorded; each interview lasted approximately three hours.*

Some details of the composition of the interviewed group may be useful. Seven of the 46 were women, and 39 had received higher education; the largest occupational groups were engineers (13), teachers (6), scientists (5) and students (5), with a variety of other white-collar occupations represented by one or two members for each; the age distribution was: 20–29—6, 30–39—11, 40–49—12, 50–59—12, 60 and over—5; main areas of residence in the USSR were: Moscow (12), Leningrad (6), Odessa (4), Kishinev (3), two each came from Kiev, Kharkov, Chernovtsy, Minsk, Novosibirsk and Sverdlovsk, one each came from Kazan, Vilna, Lvov, Tfilisi and Dushanbe, and four came from smaller towns. The interviewees were selected for their specialized knowledge of the different settings of political participation in the Soviet Union, and cannot, of course, be regarded as comprising a representative sample of some parent population in the USSR or, for that matter, of Soviet immigrants to Israel. Nor, it should be stated at the outset, could a meaningful correlation be established between the composition of the group and the distribution of views reported below. References to such distribution are framed in somewhat vague circumlocutions such as "a few," "a small minority," "nearly all,"

* The project was carried out under the auspices of the Soviet and East European Research Centre of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. I am also grateful to the University's Central Research Fund for additional financial support and to the Oral Documentation Section of the Institute of Contemporary Jewry of the Hebrew University for technical assistance.

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etc.; to provide numerical indicators would be to indulge in a spurious precision not warranted by the nature of the evidence.

As intimated, the responses to questions relevant to the topics of this essay differed on a number of points. But there was complete consensus on one point, viz. the overwhelming presence and power of the CPSU. "The Party is like God . . . it is omnipresent," said one interviewee. "The Party's influence is enormous, it does not cease for a single second," said another. Such extravagant formulations were quite common. Though the Party's intervention in the affairs of other Soviet institutions was often experienced as irksome and wasteful of time and resources it would not occur to anyone to challenge this state of affairs: "What reaction can there be to air? One is used to air, one breathes it. . . . It is the natural order of things." Only a few interviewees could envisage a hypothetical situation in which the Party's role would be substantially diminished. A typical reply was the following: "I cannot imagine such a picture, because for that, altogether different conditions would be needed; for that, another Russia is needed. . . . My fantasy refuses to function."

At the local level Party supremacy meant that "the first man in the *raion,* the first man in the city, the first man in the region, is the secretary of the corresponding Party organization." The *obkom* secretary was "Governor-General" of his region, the *raikom* secretary was the "boss [*khozyain*]" of the district or city borough. As another interviewee put it: "... whenever situations of conflict arise, requiring greater clout, as it were, one turned to the Party *raikom.* Because the *raikom* is the unchallenged arbiter in all matters, all matters! A letter over the signature of the *raikom* secretary opens and closes the doors of any organization."

To be sure, in the individual enterprise the principle of one-man management was generally observed. While the director of the enterprise would consult with the secretary of the primary organization, especially on personnel matters, it was in most cases the director who was indisputably in charge. The Party secretary was "the director's assistant," "the second man in the enterprise," etc. As a rule, enterprise management and Party organization (or committee) worked in double harness. For many practical purposes indeed, they were indistinguishable; the director, the chief engineer, the heads of the more important shops and departments, in fact, the *zavodskaya verkhushka,* were usually members of the Party bureau. A situation of rivalry or conflict between the two was regarded as inconceivable by most interviewees. Director and Party secretary were "two faces but . . . one hand. What the director orders, the Party secretary does . . . In my view, there can be no conflict, otherwise the work could not be carried on. They are closely tied to each other." In the words of another interviewee: "Merely to pose such a question seems to me incorrect. There is no such difference between the Party and the managerial apparatus as you imagine. . . ."

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Nevertheless, several interviewees could recall instances of disputes between enterprise director and Party secretary, and in some of these it was the latter who had the upper hand. Personalities played a part, of course, and particularly the backing which each could muster from higher authority. As one interviewee put it: "Victory will go to the man with the stronger hand, that is to say, not his own hand but the hand that supports him." But such cases were the exception rather than the rule. While the primary Party organization frequently "interfered . . . in all matters" and attempted "to encompass all areas of activity" in the enterprise, any antagonistic relationship, such as might be expected to arise from an independent assertion of "the right to control the work of the administration," granted to the primary Party organization in the Party Statutes (Art. 60), would not be sustained for any length of time. The relevant passage from an interview with an elderly engineer from Kiev illustrates the manner in which relations between director and Party secretary were generally seen:

> In the enterprise he [the Party secretary] is subordinate to the director. The director is called to the Party *raikom* and to the Party *gorkom*; he is the one who is responsible. That is why the director is always a Party member. Invariably! . . . And the Party secretary . . . will not remain secretary of the Party organization if he tries to show any sort of independence. If he goes against the director . . . there are such cases, when, let us say, the *raikom* or some other higher organ decides to remove the director. Then they put up the secretary of the primary Party organization and he starts speaking out [against the director] at the Party meeting; now he feels that the *raikom* or *gorkom* are behind him, he is no longer afraid . . . There was such a case . . . And so at the Party meeting [the director] was not elected to the Party bureau. The director! Can you imagine? If the director is not elected to the Party bureau he cannot be a director. It is as simple as that. He is a finished man.

PERCEPTIONS of the strength and influence of the CPSU focussed primarily on the professional apparatus of the Party and its full-time functionaries rather than on the mass membership. But the fact that the "top people" were overwhelmingly represented in the Party undoubtedly reinforced its image as the "leading force" of Soviet society. All interviewees were aware that "not every Party member occupies a high post but everyone occupying a high post is almost invariably a Party member." With rare exceptions Party membership was an indispensable requirement for advancement to the higher reaches of one's profession, and this fact dominated the considerations that led members of the white-collar classes to seek or accept Party membership. Ideological motivation accounted for no more than a small minority of new recruits. A significant change had occurred in this regard since the 1930s and 1940s. "I am not a

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communist, I am a Party member." was how an interviewee described the prevailing attitude.

Party members could be divided into two categories: those who sought membership and those who had it thrust upon them—" the active and the passive joiners," as one interviewee put it. The former, aware of the career advantages associated with Party membership, began at an early stage of their adult lives to collect " credits " that would facilitate Party entry: one would volunteer for service as a *druzhinnik,* a second would display conspicuous activism in the Komsomol, a third would make a point of regularly attending one of the political studies programmes (*politucheba*), and so on. Some took such preparatory steps in the last years of their university studies, others waited until they had actually started employment. That younger members found it easier to enter the Party because they were less likely to be suspected of opportunist motives was a widely shared belief—" People above the age of 40 may be asked: ' Where have you been until now? ' " In any case, the link between desirable career opportunities and Party membership is so much part of Soviet reality that few young people remain unaware of it as they set out on their professional careers. " Wherever you go the first question is whether you are a Party member." And so, as one interviewee put it, one joined as a form of " prophylactic inoculation " against the vicissitudes of professional life. For not only were the more responsible posts virtually reserved for Party members—" for holders of red cards only," as one interviewee put it, but Party members also enjoyed preferential access to most other white-collar jobs—" it is always the Party member who has the greater chances, in the majority of cases, in the majority of enterprises." Several interviewees reported that their appointment or promotion had explicitly been made conditional on their subsequent admission into the Party.

Clearly, the line that divides the " active " from the " passive " joiners is not a sharp one. Still, it is not uncommon for people to try and evade entry into the Party for as long as possible. The responsible Party functionaries were constantly on the look-out for suitable new recruits: " They sized you up and when they thought you were ready they approached you." " Every Party organizer considers it a matter of honour . . . to recruit new members." The response " I am not yet sufficiently prepared for the high calling of a Party member," or " I am not yet ideologically mature," was a conventional pretext hardly likely to achieve more than a temporary respite: " The *raikom* asks ' How is [Party] growth? ' . . . If the Party organization is not growing it is a sign of crisis . . . They begin to push and pull a little—' Why have you not joined the Party? Are you against Soviet power? What is the matter? ' . . . In short, one joins." Nor were these encounters always conducted in language that preserved the facade of the " high calling " of the CPSU member. One interviewee told of a case in which the excuse " I am not worthy "

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was promptly put down by the reply "Even worthier people than you also join." And several others reported that they had submitted to altogether reasonable and well-intentioned admonitions in which the career advantages of Party membership had been urged upon them, or had themselves, as Party secretaries, employed such arguments in persuading others to apply for admission.

The following two extracts from interviews with two young engineers exemplify the attitudes and circumstances which often accompanied decisions about entry into the CPSU. One, from Moscow:

> The majority of cases I knew were just instances of ambition dictated by careerism . . . or perhaps one should call it good sense. One was well aware that one could never under any circumstances reach the position which . . . one could reach as a Party member. Moreover, people were sometimes told: "Soon such and such a job will become available, but you are not a Party member. Join the Party and you can have the job."

The other, from Minsk, told of an occasion when he appeared before an interview board in connection with his prospective promotion.

> As a rule all leading personnel [at the enterprise] were Party members, everyone of them—all heads of shops. I do not know of any heads of shops who are not in the Party . . . I heard that there is a confidential instruction that non-members are not to be appointed . . . So at this interview, when the question of my appointment was discussed [they] asked, for example . . . why there were no posters in my hall, especially of the directives of the latest Party congress. "There must be posters! You are not conducting political upbringing work!" And then [the Party secretary] asked: "And why are you not yet a member of the Party?" This is the kind of provocative question they always ask when they want to embarrass you, and I simply did not know what to answer. What should I say—that I am not worthy of it, the kind of thing that is usually answered? If I said that I did not want to join it would be my last day at the enterprise.

A point that needs to be stressed is that for some people entry into the Party was hardly a conscious decision. One joined, in the words of one interviewee, "automatically, almost without any effort." It was the accepted thing to do, just as joining the Komsomol had been in secondary school; one's friends and colleagues did it; not to do it was to be left out, and not only because one's career was likely to be adversely affected. As another interviewee, who had joined the Party as a regular officer, put it: "When nearly every officer in the unit is in the Party," how can you not be a Party member? They have a meeting, discuss directives, various questions, exchange news. How would you feel? It is as if your neighbour had invited everyone to a birthday party and left you out." Party saturation of officers is, of course, particularly high, but many others felt similarly, if less intensely, that to stay out of the Party was to put oneself outside the

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mainstream. The kind of reflex suspicion with which Party functionaries regarded persons who at certain stages of their career had not yet entered the Party is merely the other side of this coin. It is not so much that Party membership is taken as evidence of political loyalty as that non-membership is often taken as evidence of disloyalty. For it is non-entry into the Party which is the result of a deliberate decision; entry, at least for the "passive" joiners, proceeds "automatically, almost without any effort."

While the prospect of career advancement was cited as the most important advantage of Party membership, job security, too, was seen by many as a significant material benefit. Fear of dismissal from work, it would seem, is a rather more potent factor in the lives of Soviet citizens in the white-collar occupations than is perhaps generally suspected by outside observers. Many interviewees referred to it in a variety of contexts and clearly regarded Party membership as providing some measure of protection: "If a person is a Party member it is more difficult to dismiss him; the approval of the Party bureau is needed, etc. If they want to, they can still dismiss him. But it is more difficult." A few interviewees, indeed, regarded the immunity of Party membership as well-nigh absolute: "Party members knew that they practically could not be dismissed." Many felt that Party members could afford more than non-members to be slack in their work performance or generally engage in deviant behaviour normally subject to strict disciplinary measures. "If there are shortcomings in one's work," said one, "then they usually take into consideration one's Party membership . . . the shortcomings of Party members must not be publicized among non-members." According to another:

> If a non-member did some of the things which a Party member did—there were many such cases in our organization—then he would be severely punished . . . [it meant] demotion or even dismissal. A Party member in such a case gets off with so-called moral traumas; that is, his case is discussed at the Party meeting and he is given a reprimand. . . . After a year, if he has not done anything else to compromise himself, the reprimand is struck from the record and he is as clean as a whistle.

In addition to these career-linked benefits, Party membership was seen as conferring a variety of more diffuse privileges, from rest-cure vouchers (*putevki*) to foreign travel, the allocation of apartments and even a degree of immunity for misdemeanours which in the case of other citizens often led to criminal prosecution. It was generally known, as one interviewee put it, that "Party members get all the comforts." For aspiring scientists the Party card was regarded as smoothing the path towards the successful defence of the Candidate's dissertation; several interviewees reported that they had joined the Party for that reason. And for artists, too, there were privileges which Party members could claim for themselves. In the words of an

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interviewee who had served as Party secretary of a local artists union:

> Say an exhibition is about to be held. . . . An artist submits his work and it is rejected. A Party member can turn to the Party bureau and complain. I used to receive phone calls from 8 o'clock in the morning. "Why didn't I get a commission?" . . . "Why has my work not been exhibited?" . . . "Do we not have to show that we are the vanguard?" . . . I could help people in respect of work. . . . I could go to the exhibition committee and say: "You did not accept this work for the exhibition. It should be accepted." That does not mean that success was always one hundred per cent certain. Still, the secretary of a Party organization has influence. . . . I could go to the borough committee, to the city committee. . . .

WHAT has been said so far applies primarily to members of white-collar groups. With regard to workers the situation was rather different. Workers had relatively little to gain from Party membership. They might enjoy priority in the distribution of *putevki* and bonus payments, but the direct career advantages were negligible or non-existent. The result was that although Party organizations exerted continuous pressure to increase the number of workers among Party recruits, the workers themselves were most reluctant to join—"the workers laugh at people with red cards." This was particularly true of those whose recruitment the Party was most anxious to promote, namely, skilled workers with good production records and unexceptionable personal lives. Such workers "simply had to be dragged into the Party by their ears." In some cases, presumably where the proportion of workers among Party members was especially low, quotas were set under which several workers had to be recruited for each white-collar candidate. All the interviewees who as Party secretaries had been directly concerned with the problem of worker recruitment reported that workers were often unwilling to make minimal efforts to meet the specially lax entry conditions applied to them, such as to acquire elementary knowledge of the Party Statutes, for example. (One worker, when reprimanded on that score by the Party commission which vetted his membership application, declared that he had no wish to join the Party and had only signed the application form at the urging of his Party secretary. It may be added that in other areas of political participation covered by the interviews workers were also said to conduct themselves with less respect for the norms of Soviet political life than did members of the administrative and technical intelligentsia.)

ACCESS to information not available to the public at large was seen by most interviewees as at best a marginal advantage of Party membership. There were the so-called "closed letters," i.e.

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confidential Central Committee circular letters read from time to time to closed Party meetings on a variety of domestic and foreign topics, such as Central Committee plenums of which details had not been published in the press, economic shortcomings and failures, particularly in agriculture and food supplies, Khruschev's dismissal in 1964, the Czechoslovak events of 1968, relations with China and the situation in Vietnam and the Middle East. But in the perceptions of the interviewees the information derived from this source was not particularly significant. Central Committee letters supplemented information published in the media and occasionally deviated from it in certain respects, but were rarely in outright contradiction to it. The only instance of such direct "counter-information" recalled by interviewees was a Central Committee letter circulated after the Six-Day War in the Middle East in which Egypt was blamed for having precipitated the war. Presumably this case was more salient in their memories because it was of more immediate concern to them as Jews. In general, the interviewees had great difficulty in disentangling what they had learned from this source and from other, unauthorized sources—many claimed to have listened to foreign broadcasts quite regularly; and when probed, few could recollect items of information which had at the time struck them as particularly newsworthy. In any case, many pointed out that whatever news value the Central Committee circulars might have had was quickly shared with friends and acquaintances outside the Party—"the closed letters very soon became open letters."

A more restricted and apparently also more valuable channel of information was the periodic *raikom* briefing for Party activists. The contents and general tenor of these briefings were very similar to those of the Central Committee circular letters, but it would seem that the views expressed were rather more often in striking contrast to official versions. Thus, for example, participants at such briefings could learn that more working days per year were lost in the Soviet Union through alcoholism than in the United States through strikes, that China was "Enemy Number One," that Cuba was "like a trunk without a handle—too valuable to drop and too awkward to carry" and that the resumption of diplomatic relations with Israel would be in the Soviet interest.

Social prestige—a matter on which the interviewees could not be expected to distinguish their own opinions from those which they attributed to the non-Party public—was regarded by most as an even more doubtful asset of Party membership. Some, to be sure, felt that although the image of the Party member had been considerably tarnished over the years, nevertheless, a certain measure of prestige still attached to it. "From earliest youth," said one, "you are told that if your father is a Party member then he is an important figure." Others stressed that especially among the less sophisticated sections of the population Party members were still regarded as people "who

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behave more responsibly than others," who "discharge their work honourably," who are "truly an example to others," in short, that Party members were by and large believed to be "worthy people."

In the opinion of the majority of interviewees, however, Party members were generally regarded as ordinary Soviet citizens in no way different from non-members: "You know, it seems to me that the man in the street simply regards a Party member and a non-member as more or less the same . . . at the present time one cannot judge a person's character or his political views from the fact of his Party membership." It was widely understood that to join the Party was neither a mark of excessive opportunism nor of inordinate dedication, but simply a step to improve one's lot in life, to build a career for oneself, to provide security for one's family, etc. In the words of a middle-aged interviewee from Odessa:

> If you want to be a chief [*nachal'nik*] or if you want to secure your interests most advantageously . . . you dance to the tune and the tune is that of the Party . . . The Party member is regarded like any other mortal. One knows that a person who joined the Party did not do so for any ideological reasons, that he did not want to struggle for the cause, as it were, but simply had to join because of his job, or because he hoped that after entering the Party he would improve his position at work, and so forth.

The view of the younger generation was put by a student Komsomol activist who had himself become a Party candidate shortly before his emigration:

> People have to live, make careers for themselves. If a person who joins the Party is someone with any ability then everyone knows that he had to do it out of careerist considerations—not in the negative sense of the term, but in the positive sense: promotion at work, a normal career in academic life, in production, or whatever.

If Party members were more conformist in their behaviour, more disciplined and activist in the performance of their civic assignments (*nagruzki*)—as some, but by no means all, interviewees pointed out—then this, too, was merely part of the official conduct prescribed for Party members and not in any way distinctive of their personal qualities or beliefs. Party members "want a quiet life, like everybody else." But they were under closer supervision and civic activism was part of the price paid for Party membership. Few were taken in by this since it was general knowledge that "everything that Party members did was under compulsion." As a middle-aged engineer from Leningrad put it:

> A Party member, in contrast to a non-member is a high-energy particle, so to speak, and for that reason can be easily controlled . . . he has to excuse himself, to justify himself somehow; that is, more can simply be demanded of him. Party members are more controlled, hence their behaviour.

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But there was also a substantial minority of interviewees who thought that the status effect of Party membership was a negative one. The greater activism of Party members was ascribed by people outside the Party not only to Party discipline and control but also to the fact that Party members were often petty, if not simple-minded busybodies who enjoyed "meddling in other people's affairs." The behaviour of Party members was regarded as arrogant—"they feel high and mighty"—and their numerous privileges were widely resented. The image of Party members, according to these interviewees, was that of unprincipled opportunists, "toadies and careerists" who were "well settled in life." A current witticism that perfectly catches this mood was related by an interviewee from Moscow: "Each person at birth is offered by God a choice of two out of the following three—a conscience, brains and membership in the CPSU." What is more, Party members were said to be increasingly aware of the stigma of membership. Recent Party recruits, far from taking pride in their newly-acquired status, were ashamed of it and sought to conceal it, in some cases even from their friends and acquaintances. "The Party is going underground," is how one interviewee summed up this phenomenon.

THE reported images of Party members covered the full spectrum of opinion—from positive, to neutral, to negative—though it should, of course, be borne in mind that the views expressed were unevenly distributed and to some extent, at least, reflected the self-image of interviewees. By contrast, opinions on the professional functionaries of the Party were sharply polarized, with the overwhelming majority of interviewees taking an extremely critical position. Indeed, few other facets of Soviet life explored in the interviews called forth a comparable stream of derogatory epithets. The following sampling conveys something of the mixture of hostility and contempt which interviewees reserved for the Party *apparatchiki*: "the worst people you could meet," "their moral outlook is repulsive," "incapable of independent thought," "perfect pawns," "their entire life is one privilege," "the greatest scoundrels and parasites," "Russia's misfortune." (In some cases these descriptions were filled out by tales of high living and corruption.) Yet, alongside such exceedingly scathing comments there were also some very positive assessments. They were made by a small minority of interviewees but they deserve to be stressed precisely because they were in such stark contrast to the majority view. Especially younger Party cadres, it was said, were often capable people, educationally qualified, flexible in their approach and open to new ideas, whose life-style, moral make-up and intellectual capacity did not distinguish them from other members of the Soviet intelligentsia. The individual "profiles" which accompanied these judgments were of one, "a good man" and "a capable construction engineer" who later became head of a scientific research institute;

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another, "quite an intellectual sort of man," who liked to surround himself with the company of actors and artists; and a third, a person of "considerable intellect . . . who by all Soviet standards was qualified for his position," a man of "deserved authority" who influenced "all aspects of economic and social activity" and, moreover, behaved at all times in a "correct manner."

The interview schedule did not specifically refer to Party leaders beyond the orbit of each interviewee's immediate experience, except for one question which asked for the names of Politburo members. But comments on the national leadership were frequently interspersed in replies to other questions, and at least one very clear impression left by these comments should not go unrecorded. Interviewees' references to individual leaders were for the most part derisory, though rather mildly so, especially when compared with the sharp condemnation of local functionaries. What was most striking about them, however, was the attitude of almost total disinterestedness which they revealed. The top leaders were not only distant but also shadowy figures, indistinguishable and, indeed, interchangeable. Only a few interviewees could name more than five or six Politburo members and some had notable difficulty in going beyond the then troika of Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny. In their perceptions the Soviet leaders were an undifferentiated, collective "they"; it was quite unmistakeable that questions of "who is in and who is out?" which hold so much of the fascination of politics for Western publics, left them entirely unmoved. To one interviewee, the present leaders were "absolute masks"—in contrast to Khrushchev, who "at least was a live person." In the words of another: "No one knows them. No one is interested in them; they do not seem like living people. . . . They are faceless people."

AN interview project of the kind reported here cannot pretend to the scientific rigour that is often claimed for more ambitious, broadly-based surveys conducted with the aid of a battery of carefully calibrated and highly structured questions. But in the study of the Soviet Union and other closed systems we often have to make do with evidence that is less than satisfactory. While the extent to which the above findings meet the criteria that are generally applied to such evidence must be left to the judgment of each reader, two points may help the reader to form a judgment and should therefore be briefly taken up.

The first relates to the interview situation. All interviews took place in an informal, unconstrained atmosphere in which a measure of rapport could be quickly established, and, insofar as could be determined, interviewees spoke freely both about their experiences and their attitudes and beliefs. (A small number of cases of which this could not be said was excluded from the project.) Nor were there any obvious attempts to distort responses in ways likely to be con-

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sidered palatable to a Western interviewer. Many interviewees commented in very positive terms on different aspects of Soviet life and made comparisons with the West or Israel which were not at all unfavourable to the Soviet Union. Some affirmed their continued belief in a form of democratic Marxism or "socialism with a human face." The questions were, of course, formulated in as neutral a manner as possible—and, it may be noted, were for that reason sometimes regarded by interviewees as slightly naïve. Admittedly, in an informal and relatively unstructured interview a number of non-verbal cues—a gesture, a smile, a raised eyebrow, etc.—can easily influence responses. This said, however, I believe that the interview situation may be considered as reasonably free of response bias.

The second point concerns the extent to which the opinions of interviewees can validly be generalized for a larger population of citizens living in the USSR. The interviewees were Jews and most of them had opted for emigration. (A few had emigrated to prevent the break-up of their families.) The obvious, intuitive inference from both these facts is that their responses must be discounted for anti-Soviet bias. I can offer no rule to cope with this problem except to state my own belief, which is that the need for discount is probably not as high as might appear at first sight and quite possibly altogether redundant. The interviewees were not only members of an alienated minority; they were also for the most part people who had tried, not without success, to integrate in Soviet life at a time when the prospect of emigration seemed remote or entirely unreal. Moreover, in becoming political activists they had made some psychological commitment to the regime. For some, no doubt, the commitment was rather superficial; to become an activist was merely part of the process of making one's way in the society. For others, however, it clearly went deeper; they had, by their own accounts, joined the Party out of sincere conviction and they spoke with obvious, i.e. professed, regret and disillusionment of the negative features of Soviet reality. In between these two poles, there were those, probably the majority of interviewees, whose precise position on a pragmatism-dogmatism scale it would be both difficult and presumptuous to determine. On the topics of this paper, and, indeed, on most other political topics, the attitudes of the three groups showed no significant differentiation, and I see no reason to assume that they cannot be taken as broadly representative of the attitudes of similar socio-economic groups in Soviet society.

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# The Machinery of Corruption in the Soviet Union

**Konstantin Simis**

IN the last 25 years, the process of corruption in the Soviet Union has gone so far that the appearance of the term "kleptocracy" in the literature of Sovietology would seem to be absolutely justified as a way of describing the nature of Soviet government. A student of the subject would, however, look in vain for any degree of comprehensive information on it in the Soviet press or in academic works published in the USSR. And he will have no access to other Soviet sources such as penal statistics, which are a state secret, or to any relevant sociological research findings, as these are buried in the depths of the classified archives belonging to specialized institutes and stamped "Secret."

Wholesale corruption in general and bribery in particular are rooted in the very nature of the Soviet regime, the most prominent characteristic of which is the concentration of a monopoly of power in the hands of the Party hierarchy, a monopoly unfettered either by the law or by public opinion. The second factor, a derivative one, contributing to the spread of corruption, is the unscrupulousness of the country's ruling hierarchy.

Corruption on a massive scale first swept the Soviet state following the transition from War Communism to the NEP era. In the period between the end of NEP and the beginning of the Second World War bribery in the ruling hierarchy and in economic life was somewhat less frequent. But the war was accompanied by a wholesale outbreak of corruption on the home front among the lower and middle echelons of that hierarchy. Since that time it has formed an integral part of the Soviet administrative machine. It should be noted, however, that the real turning-point in the spread of corruption took place in the wake of the 20th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, with the collapse of the fanatical belief in the infallibility of Stalin, for many generations the incarnation of Party and authority, and with the loss of scruples by members of both the Party hierarchy and the rank-and-file.

THE characteristics of bribery among the lower echelons of the state and Party hierarchy are dictated by the circumstances in which members of the lower Party hierarchy live and by the positions they hold. Bribery exists primarily because this stratum of society has none of the legalized privileges and benefits accruing to the middle and higher echelons (special networks of restricted shops retailing

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goods of higher quality than those available in shops serving the general public and at considerably lower prices, rent-free country housing complete with servants, et cetera). Those who form the lower echelons of the ruling hierarchy use their power to make up for the absence of legal privileges by practising graft and extortions in kind on a systematic basis, as well as the usual bribery practised by all three strata of officialdom.

No accurate estimate can be made of the numbers involved in graft of this type, but they always include secretaries and heads of departments within the district committees of the Communist Party, district-level KGB and militia commanders, the chairmen of district executive councils, their deputies and departmental heads, as well as the heads of district inspectorates (the fire, public health, sanitation, and veterinary services) and, in districts not forming part of a large town or city, the district prosecutors. As for the rest, ordinary members of the local hierarchy, depending on the prevailing workaday atmosphere, can also have their fingers in the pie.

In rural districts, a cut is taken from the produce supplied by collective and state farms. Other forms of graft include free exploitation of retail (repair work, tailoring and dress-making, et cetera) and transportation services, and the use of labourers to work on gardens and allotments and on repairs to houses and flats. I shall now describe how this system of graft and extortion functions in real life.

The specific example I would first like to cite is that of a Moscow lawyer who, on retirement, settled with relatives in a small town which was the district authority headquarters for part of the Arkhangelsk *Oblast'*, on the shores of the White Sea. After settling in, he noticed that on certain days of the week lorries would be driven up to the buildings housing the local Communist Party offices, those of the local authorities and the militia headquarters, bringing for the staff of these different bodies fresh and smoked fish, carcasses of slaughtered livestock, hay for winter feed for their privately-owned cattle, potatoes and other vegetables. In the course of the next three months, the lawyer sent off letter after letter apprising the *Oblast'* Party Committee, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the national prosecutor's office of the matter. His attempts merely brought the following results: the relative he was living with was summoned to the district Party committee offices and warned that he would be dismissed from his job if his relative did not leave the town forthwith and stop writing denunciations. In order to keep his relations out of trouble, the lawyer capitulated and complied with the Party committee's ultimatum.

In the capital cities of the different republics and in those *oblast'* chief towns which are subdivided into smaller administrative districts, the district administration also uses its power to indulge in graft;

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in the towns, however, the practice is conducted in more or less covert fashion with slight variations.

One practice of great importance in the large towns and cities is graft and protection extorted from foodshops, restaurants and cafés. No publicity is ever given to incidents of this kind, and instances of officialdom being brought to court over such matters are unknown. Nevertheless, knowledge of them exists: reports of corruption used in this article are based on personal interviews with informed people and on documentation relating to court proceedings where shop and restaurant staff have been indicted for embezzling government property and for fraud practised on their customers.

A typical instance of graft as practised in restaurants and cafés can be seen in the reports of penal proceedings against the director of a large café on Gorky Street in the centre of Moscow. At this establishment, free lunches and dinners were regularly provided for senior officials in the district Party committee and the district executive committee (except for the Party secretary and the executive committee chairman), and for those in the district militia headquarters and the militia's department for the control of fraud and theft of state and socialist property [Russian acronym: *OBKhSS*], the local officer-in-charge of the militia, the fire officer and the inspector of public health, all of whom would leave the café bearing expensive cognac and the cakes and pastries for which the café is famous. According to those involved in the trial, the amount of extortion reached a daily average of between 100 and 150 rubles.

Graft in foodstuffs takes place primarily through special food shops which exist in every district. These shops bring in from the wholesale depots foodstuffs not available in the ordinary shops and retail them only to those who, *ex officio,* have the right to such privileges. All such foodstuffs as well as foods that are also for sale in normal shops are marketed to the favoured clientele at some 80 per cent less than the official state prices.

The typical way that extortion from foodstores operates can be seen in documents from the proceedings of a trial of 17 members of the staff of Gastronom No. 5, a case heard in the Moscow City Court in 1965 (all the shop staff, from sales assistants up to the manager, were indicted). The shop was the main centre from which the local elite drew their provisions. Once or twice a week, senior members of the district Party committee and the executive council or their wives would arrive to collect groceries and spirits, but they would pay only one-half or one-third of the official price for them. In addition, the district militia and *OBKhSS* chiefs were entitled to the same items, but completely free of charge. On average, 25 to 30 people were involved in the fraudulent hand-outs. From a notebook kept by the deputy manageress of the shop which listed the illegal income

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and expenditure the turnover was estimated as amounting to some 8,500–9,000 rubles per month.

Members of the local hierarchy collect these favours not for services rendered, but in exchange for providing goodwill and protection for their clients, particularly, when the need arises, protection from prosecution or investigation by the militia or the prosecutor's office. This leads to a situation where the entire senior staff of a district—from the Party secretary to the public prosecutor and the militia chief—provide protection for the very same directors of state farms and shops and chairmen of collective farms who are engaged in criminal activities (embezzlement, deception of customers and fraudulent stock-keeping) and who, irrespective of their moral qualities as individuals, are in no position to behave ethically, if only because they have no other way of paying their protection money. This in turn creates a vicious circle from which none can escape, where local Party bosses and administrations are bound up with the underworld in a tight embrace.

In practice, any attempt to combat such organized crime is doomed to failure. Even when the criminal activities of a local mafia are reported to higher authority, there is as a rule no attempt to crack down on them, and the mafia then has a chance to round on those who tried to have their crimes exposed. The following example is absolutely typical of the interaction between the local power structure, the criminal world and anyone who attempts to combat this link-up.

The case concerns a certain Romanov and his wife, respectively director of a timber-processing mill and manageress of the only shop and cafeteria in a settlement in the Ustinsk district of Arkhangelsk *Oblast'*. They practised a barefaced version of the company-store system. A portion of each worker's monthly salary was paid by the workers to the factory director and his subordinates in return for goods retailed to them at excessively high prices; customers at the cafeteria received little more than half of what they had paid for, and any inhabitant of the settlement would work for free in the Romanovs' orchard or garden whenever requested to do so.

In 1974, a campaign against the Romanovs was mounted by a tractor-driver named Popov, one of the best in the timber-mill, and one of the few people in the booze-sodden settlement who did not drink. He began writing complaints to the *oblast'* committee of the Communist Party, to the Communist Party Central Committee, to local and national newspapers. In line with regular practice in the Soviet Union, every single letter and complaint was forwarded to the district committee of the Party for detailed consideration. Since the Romanovs paid the required protection to the powers-that-be of the district (in the form of building materials, provisions, vodka and money) steps were set in motion to have Popov silenced. As Popov was a member of the Communist Party, the first secretary of the

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district committee attempted to persuade him to stop writing his complaints. Friendly persuasion failed to have the necessary effect on Popov, so the next step was to have him dismissed from his job (thereby grossly violating the Labour Code) and expelled from the Party "for discrediting honest Party members." Then came the dénouement. At the instigation of the secretary of the district party committee, the local state prosecutor instituted proceedings against Popov for slander, issued a warrant for his arrest and then personally acted as prosecutor during the court hearing of the case. Popov spent five months in jail, before a Moscow lawyer, called in by his daughter who was living in Moscow, managed to get the sentence repealed by the Supreme Court of the RSFSR. On his return from imprisonment, Popov was threatened with new proceedings and forced to sell his house and leave the district.

SIDE by side with regular extortion for general protection there has grown up a widespread practice of one-off bribes for particular situations. In contradistinction to the regular protection exacted by almost everyone who belongs to the lower echelons of the state and Party hierarchy, one-off bribes are equally widespread both at the middle and upper levels of the Party and state machine.

It is impossible to estimate the numbers and types of officials who take bribes. An analysis of available sources gives grounds for believing that bribes are taken at every level of the hierarchy, from chairmen of village councils to the Chairman of the Council of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet (Nasreddinova) and, in the Party, from secretaries of factory committees to candidate members of the Politburo (Mzhavanadze).

The evidence shows that bribes are taken both for committing illegal acts (the unjust sentencing of individuals who have been framed, falsification of academic awards, and so on) and for the fulfilment of activities which any public servant is obliged to perform regularly (examination of students, hospitalization of the sick, and so forth).

It is impossible to compile an exhaustive list of situations in which bribes are taken. The list given by Khrushchev in a 1962 speech [1] (allocation of housing or land, granting of pension rights, admission to colleges and universities, awarding of education certificates and academic diplomas) is far from being complete. In practice, bribes are offered and taken for everything, ranging from certificates of place of residence to appointments to ministerial posts in the constituent republics of the USSR.

It nonetheless remains possible for the student of the problem, if he analyzes court proceedings, articles in the Soviet press and reliable

[1] *Pravda*, 20 Nov. 1962.

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information from well-informed people, to draw up a fairly comprehensive list of the most widespread and typical situations involving bribery, even though this list may not be an exhaustive one.

BRIBERY is traditionally a mass phenomenon among the lower and middle ranks of the militia. It is at its most widespread among those of the militia employed in the internal residence permit departments and in the state road transport inspectorate (Russian acronym: *GAI*).

Staff of the residence permit departments of the militia take bribes for issuing such permits (i.e., permits entitling an individual to reside in a given locality or in a given dwelling). The scale of bribes for residence permits varies widely from town to town. Information on this type of bribe is never encountered in the Soviet press or in published court proceedings. If one examines unpublished court proceedings, however, and questions persons who have given such bribes, one concludes that the sums of money involved for major *oblast'* towns in the RSFSR range from 100 to 500 rubles and may reach 1,000 rubles in Moscow or Leningrad.

Over the last few decades, bribery among the militia officers working in the road transport inspectorate has become more or less universal. This may be obliquely inferred from the fact that four of the 26 cases involving accusations of bribery published in the *Bulletin of the Supreme Court of the USSR 1968–77* involved personnel of the inspectorate.

The passing of bribes in order to obtain driving licences (issued by the road transport inspectorate) has become unimaginably widespread in both rural and urban areas. By the beginning of the 1970s fixed rates had sprung up in Moscow, known to one and all: 200 rubles for the normal licence and 150 rubles for the lowest grade of professional driver's licence (grade 3).

In addition to those involving driving licences, road transport inspectorate officers take bribes on a regular basis (10 rubles) for issuing test certificates of vehicle roadworthiness.

However, bribery is most prevalent among the militia officers who man the inspectorate highway patrols. In these cases bribes are paid by drivers involved in traffic violations who wish to avoid having their licences endorsed by the officer concerned. In this kind of situation bribery has become such an everyday phenomenon that whenever a driver is stopped he immediately slips money into his driving licence as he hands it to the highway patrol man (from one ruble for minor violations to 50 rubles for being stopped while driving under the influence of alcohol).

On intercity roads the main income of the road transport inspectorate officers comes from bribes taken from those accompanying the drivers of lorries carrying meat, fruit or vegetables to the city markets

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for sale either by private citizens or by the collective farms. The patrolmen extort bribes by threatening to detain the lorry for several days to establish the legality of the documentation relating to the lorry or the producer, or by refusing point-blank to allow it to proceed. According to available documentation for the Russian Federation, the Ukraine and Belorussia, bribes range from 10 to 50 rubles per lorryload, depending on the value of the produce involved.

Officers attached to the criminal investigation department and *OBKhSS* whose duties involve them in regular contacts with secret informers, receive bribes from the latter. These are paid whenever militia departments permit their secret informers to continue their criminal activities in order to infiltrate the underworld or to obtain information on foreigners, if this type of activity brings in a regular income (theft, foreign currency speculation, prostitution). Evidence of this type of bribery is never reported in the Soviet press, but cases of it are not that rare in the courts. The writer himself has on three occasions taken part in court cases involving charges against professional shop thieves who were secret informers for the Moscow C.I.D. In each case it was established during the court hearings that the accused made monthly payments ranging from 300 to 500 rubles to their contacts in the C.I.D. Prostitutes operating in Moscow, Leningrad and other major cities and regularly dealing with a foreign clientèle all work hand in glove either with the militia or directly with the KGB, to whom they pass on information about their clients. (This kind of collaboration can never be brought to a halt, for refusal automatically incurs banishment from the city in question.) These prostitutes who provide information through the militia normally pay a portion of their income to their case officers (the author has no information regarding similar payments to KGB personnel).

The most sizeable incomes from bribery are those received from officers working in the special *OBKhSS* organization which is engaged, under the direction of the KGB, in efforts to check illegal currency operations. When the currency black market was at its zenith (the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s) the leading operators in this business were informers of the *OBKhSS* and the KGB (Dimit-Yakovlev, known as Dim Dimych, and Jan Rokotov, nicknamed Kosoi—Squinty—both of whom were subsequently shot). In return for immunity from prosecution for major black-market currency operations, they shared their enormous earnings (running into hundreds of thousands of dollars) with the *OBKhSS* officers engaged in the drive against currency speculation, who in their turn passed on a proportion of their takings to their own superiors. (The bribes took the form of foreign currency, precious stones and Soviet money.) [2]

[2] Sources for this type of bribe are the criminal proceedings in the cases against Yakovlev, Rokotov and the *OBKhSS* officers charged with receiving bribes from the former.

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THE sale of office has become an everyday phenomenon in eight of the Soviet republics (the three republics of the Caucasus and five republics of central Asia).

Where appointment to offices not coming under the *nomenklatura* (that is posts not requiring confirmation at the corresponding level of the Party hierarchy) is at stake, the bribe is usually made to the head of the institution responsible for the appointment. But for appointments to posts in the Party, state or judicial hierarchy for which approval by the *oblast'* Party committee or by the central committee of the particular republic is mandatory, the bribe is paid to the functionary at the appropriate level in the Party apparatus. The scale of the bribe depends on the prestige attached to the post and the scale of illegal income which it can yield. For example in Georgia and Azerbaidjan (up until 1970–72), a bribe of the order of 150,000 or 200,000 rubles was given to either one of the secretaries of the central committee of the republic or to the head of the department of administration in the central committee for securing "election" to the post of first secretary of a district committee. The scale of bribes for appointment as minister ranged from 100,000 rubles (minister of social security) to 250,000 rubles (minister of trade). The rate for appointment to the post of head of the district militia was 50,000 rubles (this for a monthly salary of 150–200 rubles). Finally, for "election" to the position of people's judge or for appointment as district prosecutor, the figure was 30,000 rubles (for a monthly salary of 120–130 rubles).[3]

THE increasing competition to enter universities and other establishments of higher education has made academic admissions the source of a new and hitherto unknown type of bribery. Where reports of legal proceedings against academic staff are analyzed they suggest that it has the following pattern.

Admission procedures to academic institutions are such that without support from a large number of teachers, even the rector is not in a position to ensure admittance for a school-leaver whose application for admission has been backed up by a bribe. For this reason the criminal conspiracy is extended to include teachers who invigilate at entrance examinations and ordinary members of the administration (secretaries to committees on admissions, deans of faculties and so forth). After the bribe has been paid to a middleman for distribution to those involved, the name of the applicant is given to teachers sitting in on the entrance examinations and the latter, irrespective of the candidate's ability, give him high marks to guarantee him

[3] Information regarding Georgia was obtained by the author from on-the-spot statements and from reports of criminal proceedings dating back to 1972; information on Azerbaidjan is taken from J. Zemtsov, *La corruption en Union Soviétique* (Paris, 1976).

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admission to the institution. There is no universal fixed fee for this service. The scale of bribes in Moscow and Leningrad varied between 1,000 and 3,000 rubles and admission to the medical institute in Georgia cost 15,000 rubles (for a doctor's average salary of 110–120 rubles per month after five years of practice), while in Azerbaidjan it cost 30,000 rubles.

BRIBERY of senior officials in the Party apparatus with the purpose of influencing members of the judiciary or officers engaged in the detection and prosecution of crime has become widespread throughout the Soviet Union; in the provinces, in smaller towns and in rural areas it is a regular occurrence.

This type of bribery would not be possible were it not for the institutionalized dependence of the courts and the public prosecutors on the Party apparatus. Despite the principle of an independent judiciary enshrined in the Constitution, the Soviet courts are an integral part of the state apparatus, which, like any other sector of the state system, is itself subordinate to the Party apparatus. The country is subject to an unwritten but strictly observed rule under which investigators, prosecutors and members of the judiciary, whether or not they are members of the Communist Party, are obliged to comply with the directives of all Party representatives empowered with a mandate to issue them. Obviously, were a judge or a public prosecutor to adhere to a strictly legalistic interpretation of his functions, he might well not execute such directives. However, both judges and prosecutors are fully aware that refusal to do so would mean immediate suspension from their jobs, or dismissal soon after.

This degree of dependence provides members of the Party hierarchy with wide opportunities for turning their influence to their own advantage, concealing the fact behind the interests of the Party apparatus. After all, it is frequently impossible to distinguish clearly, at district or *oblast'* level, between the general interests of the ruling clique and the personal interests of its members (as is evinced, for example, in the account of the tractor-driver Popov jailed by a whim of the district Party committee, described above). Another factor assisting in the widespread practice of bribe-taking among Party officials is their immunity from prosecution. Even in the (extremely rare) instances where they are exposed they are not threatened with real punishment for they are practically never brought before the courts as criminals. The present author knows of only one exception to this, but it is the very exception which proves the rule.

Over a period of several years first secretary Galushko of the Kuibyshev District Party Committee in Moscow, who was also a member of the Moscow City Committee of the Party, accumulated bribes from the relatives and associates of black-market speculators under investigation or prosecution in the people's court in his district.

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The chairman of the district executive council acted as his front-man, seeking out potential clients, and as his intermediary for the actual passing of bribes.

On receipt of the bribe (ranging from 25,000 to 100,000 rubles), Galushko would call in the investigating officer, the public prosecutor or the judge, and issue categoric instructions, apparently emanating from the district committee, either to bring the investigation to a halt or to arrive at a judgment under which the accused would go free. He did this openly and whenever there was any attempt to rebuff him he was wont to become aggressive, threatening, as was later attested to by witnesses in court: "Are you tired of being a judge?" or "Won't you miss your Party ticket? Where did you find it—on a rubbish dump?" Galushko was unmoved by any fear that the investigator or judge would immediately go and complain to higher authority about his activities. He knew too well the way the machinery of Party power operated and self-confidently turned the fact to his own advantage; he obtained the result he wanted more than 10 times without once failing in his objective. And the only reason that Galushko was eventually indicted was because the machinery broke down and misfired when two exceptionally non-conformist individuals got embroiled in his schemes.

The first exception was a young investigator from the *OBKhSS* who was a recent university graduate and still naïvely believed everything that he had been taught about "socialist legality." He broke the unwritten law of the system and went off to the first secretary of the district committee of the Party to complain. The second exception was Moscow *OBKhSS* chief General Grishin, whom he managed to interview. Grishin was a young careerist with an adventurous streak who took it upon himself to make an unprecedented violation of the unwritten and written rules: without any authority from the first secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee and without a search warrant from the public prosecutor's office, he made a search of the office belonging to the first secretary of the district Party committee. The safe revealed 70,000 rubles and a panic-stricken Galushko confessed to everything at his very first questioning. The Moscow City Committee found itself trapped and was forced to issue a warrant for his arrest and for proceedings against him. But Grishin was never forgiven for this violation of the unwritten laws governing the power of the Party apparatus. Under instructions from the Moscow Committee, the Moscow KGB set up an investigation against him and about a year later he was arrested and jailed for abuse of his official position.[4]

In every respect except for its dénouement, the Galushko story is a model of this particular category of bribe. The part of the bribe-

[4] The writer was present at the court hearings of Galushko's case, held *in camera* at the Moscow City Court in 1959.

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taker is played by the first secretary of the responsible Party body; the bribe is passed through a middle-man; directives to the criminal investigation agency and the public prosecutor's office are given directly and apparently emanate from the responsible Party body; members of the judiciary and officers engaged in criminal investigation and prosecution receive no share of the bribe and do not form part of the conspiracy. The bribes vary in scale according to where the events occur but are always considerable because they are mainly given for freeing black marketeers who have large funds at their disposal and because the bribe-takers are sufficiently highly placed in the Party hierarchy for small-scale bribes to be of no interest at all to them.

CORRUPTION of law officers and the judiciary in the Soviet Union is of uneven distribution. From data collected, it can be shown that bribery is the rule rather than the exception in nine of the USSR's constituent Soviet Republics (the three republics of Trans-Caucasia, the five Central Asian republics and Moldavia) and in districts remote from the capitals and *oblast'* centres in the six remaining republics.

Naturally enough, this fact does not mean that members of the judiciary and law officers in Moscow, Leningrad and the higher tribunals cannot be bought. But in the 1970s bribery cases at these levels have become comparatively rare. It nevertheless remains true that instances of prosecution for such crimes have occurred, with the people's judges for the Kiev and Babushkin Districts of Moscow being convicted for taking bribes (1975–76) and with unexposed incidents of bribe-taking occurring in the Prosecutor's Office of the RSFSR, designed to have protests registered in order to secure the quashing of sentences already handed down, and among members of the RSFSR Supreme Court, to have the appeal courts reduce sentences meted out by lower courts. It is only in the last 15 years that this comparatively reasonable situation has developed in the legal and judicial apparatus of the capital and at the national level. From the period of the Second World War right up until the mid-1960s, bribery in the courts and prosecutors' offices at these levels had been on an epidemic scale. The period of massive bribe-taking in the national and Moscow magistrates' and prosecutors' offices culminated in the early 1960s in a series of court hearings at which every single people's judge in the Kiev and Balashikhin Districts of Moscow was sentenced or removed from office, together with some 70 per cent of the members of the Moscow *Oblast'* court, staff of the Moscow *Oblast'* prosecutor's office, the prosecutors' offices of the Kiev, Balashikhin and Kalinin Districts of Moscow, a number of members of the Moscow City Court, officials of the Moscow City Prosecutor's Office, and the head of appeals admissions for the RSFSR Supreme Court who had acted as

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go-between for bribe-givers and members of the RSFSR Supreme Court who were never identified.

The ways and means of bribe-passing vary from place to place. In remote rural districts the bribe is normally passed directly to the person for whom it is intended. But reports from a vast number of court hearings show that the more typical procedure for bribe-passing is for the bribe to be dealt with by a professional middle-man, and it is not unusual for a whole chain of middle-men to be involved. The scale of bribes runs the whole gamut from agricultural produce to hundreds of thousands of rubles. It should be borne in mind here that the bribe passes through the hands of one or more middle-men before it reaches its proper recipient, and that the middle-men take advantage of the fact that no supervision is possible to siphon off a considerable cut for themselves (up to 50 per cent of the entire sum, it transpires from court reports).

It should not be imagined that decisions of the prosecutors' offices or sentences passed down by judges in return for bribes are necessarily outside the law. In the light of judicial proceedings, it can be shown that bribes are passed to obtain legal as well as illegal decisions. From the documentation available one can ascertain that the ratio of legal to illegal decisions arrived at in return for bribes is more or less stable. In the series of trials at which members of the judiciary and law officers were arraigned for bribery, legal opinion was given on each case on whether or not the decisions taken by the investigating officer or prosecutor or whether the sentence handed down by the judge in return for a bribe flew in the face of the law. Figures for the whole series of trials did not vary much: it was felt that 65 to 70 per cent of all decisions and sentences passed in return for bribes did not run counter either to the law or to natural justice.

THE foregoing does not claim to be an exhaustive list of all the spheres of Soviet life attacked by the cancer of corruption. At the same time, if one recalls that bribery in the Soviet Union also takes place to ensure admission of an expectant mother to a good maternity home, to obtain housing, to arrange for admission to hospital and to get a burial plot in a cemetery, then it can be stated without fear of exaggeration that the average Soviet citizen is accompanied by bribery from womb to tomb.

ANY study of corruption at the top in the USSR's Party and state hierarchy is complicated by the fact that occasions when bribe-takers belonging to this echelon have been exposed are rare and that those who have been brought to court for such offences throughout the Soviet period can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Nevertheless, in the period 1964–77 when the leaderships in Azerbaidjan, Georgia, Kirghizia and Uzbekistan were being replaced, the normally

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carefully concealed picture of corruption among the bosses of the ruling clique was revealed in slightly greater splendour.

In 1964 the CPSU Central Committee was informed by KGB departments that the entire leadership of state and Party in Kirghizia, headed by the first secretary of its central committee and the chairman of its council of ministers, had been in the pay of a highly ramified network of black marketeers and underworld racketeers for many years. It had been established that the latter had set up dozens of clandestine factories, collective farms and plantations of opium and cannabis, which were not officially registered, for which no state taxes were paid and the income from which was shared out between those engaged in these criminal operations and the rulers of Kirghizia. Essentially it all amounted to a system of paying regular taxes to the ruling hierarchy of the Republic in return for the freedom to engage in criminal activities on a scale rarely met with in the Soviet Union.[5]

This was the first time the ruling hierarchy of an entire republic had ever been exposed and the CPSU Politburo could not bring itself to adopt radical measures. The first secretary of the Kirghizian central committee kept his post, the remaining members of the Party and state leadership were replaced, but the only people to be tried were one of the deputy chairmen of the council of ministers and the underworld racketeers, three of whom were executed by firing squad.

In 1969 the efforts of Aliev, head of the Azerbaidjan Republic's KGB, an ambitious young man, led to the exposure of the Party and state leadership in Azerbaidjan. He made use of the KGB operational network, largely composed of Russians and untouched by corruption, to build up a dossier showing that all three branches of the Party and state hierarchy in the Republic, including Akhundov, first secretary of the central committee in Azerbaidjan and member of the CPSU Central Committee, were found to be systematically accepting bribes for appointments to positions in the state and Party apparatus, for protecting underworld racketeers and so forth.

The facts cited by Zemtsov[6] bear out the fact that Akhundov and other senior members of the republic's administration regularly gave expensive presents to their highly placed patrons in Moscow: Akhundov making gifts to Khrushchev and members of his family, the chairman of the Azerbaidjan council of ministers giving presents to Baibakov, the deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and chairman of Gosplan, et cetera.

Aliev made use of the good offices of national KGB deputy chairman Tsvigun, a relative of Brezhnev's wife, to get permission from the Central Committee of the CPSU to break up the corruption-

[5] The investigations in Kirghizia were conducted by a team from the KGB Central HQ headed by Mikhail Mikhailovich Syshchikov, investigator for matters of particular importance.

[6] Op. cit.

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ridden leadership in Azerbaidjan. But even so, the highest placed bribe-takers went unpunished. Though Akhundov may have been relieved of his post as first secretary "in accordance with his own wishes" by decision of an Azerbaidjan central committee plenum of 14 July 1969, he was nevertheless elected vice-president of the Azerbaidjan Academy of Sciences a few months later. At the next two plenums of the republic's central committee (20 March and 30 December 1970) motions were adopted removing most of the remaining top members of the Azerbaidjan administration from office, but only a few individuals of ministerial rank were ever brought to trial (such as the minister for internal affairs and his four deputies), though several members of the judiciary and staff of the prosecutor's office and many militia officers were prosecuted.[7] Aliev was subsequently elected first secretary of the Azerbaidjan Party central committee and member of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

The ruling clique in Georgia led by first secretary Mzhavanadze, a candidate member of the Politburo, and by second secretary Churkin, were exposed by minister of internal affairs Shevarnadze, a man whose age and ambition were similar to Aliev's, but who was acting on his own initiative and without permission from Moscow. In Georgia too, Moscow allowed every single high-ranking bribe-taker to go unpunished. Mzhavanadze was not even expelled from the Communist Party but went on to receive a personal pension some five times the maximum paid to ordinary Soviet mortals, Although second secretary Churkin was expelled from the Party, he was immediately appointed head of the Kalinin *Oblast'* consumers' union in the RSFSR, a position coming under the *nomenklatura* heading, which only a Communist Party member can fill and even then only after confirmation by the relevant Party body (in this case not the *Oblast'* Party committee, as would normally be necessary, but the CPSU Central Committee).

The go-betweens in the bribes, the wives of Mzhavanadze and Churkin, were likewise not brought to trial. As in Kirghizia and Azerbaidjan, the people who ended up in dock were the bribe-givers: large-scale underworld racketeers and individuals who had been engaged in the purchase of office (not in the Party apparatus, but in industry, trade, medical institutions, et cetera). A series of these trials took place between 1973 and 1977 in Georgia, where the chief bribe-takers and their go-betweens were not even subpoenaed as witnesses.

The 1970s have seen a bitter struggle for power in the Uzbekistan ruling elite, between the clan backing the local central committee first secretary Rashidov and those loyal to Council of Ministers Chairman Kurbanov and Supreme Soviet Presidium Chairman Nasreddinova. Exploiting the dominance of the Party machine over the apparatus of the state, Rashidov made use of the Uzbekistan KGB

[7] Ibid.

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(nominally responsible to the chairman of the Uzbekistan council of ministers) to amass proofs of his opponents' guilt and to get permission from the CPSU Central Committee to have them tried as criminals. The result was a series of trials in Uzbekistan in 1976–77, including the trials of Kurbanov and Pulat Khodzhaev, chairman of the Uzbekistan supreme court. Nasreddinova was not tried, for she had recently been given the extremely prestigious post of Chairman of the Council of Nationalities, one of the two chambers in the USSR Supreme Soviet, and there were consequent fears for the scandal that would be brought down upon the regime; she was not expelled from the Party either, but was actually appointed a deputy minister for industry.

From the documentation relating to the cases and from information obtained from well-informed persons it transpires that the chief members of the Uzbekistan administration received a regular tribute from the heads of collective and state farms, industry and commerce, in return for protection from prosecution for illegal activities (fraud and theft, black-marketeering, narcotics production). Each of the leaders had his own clients who paid their tithes and used the protection of their patrons to good effect (for example, every single shop and stall in the Alai Bazaar in Tashkent paid protection money to Kurbanov).

Additional monies were paid for specific services such as the sale of office (Kurbanov, Nasreddinova); for the granting of pardons for convicted criminals by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet (Nasreddinova), the obtaining of favourable verdicts and decisions from the Supreme Court (Pulat Khodzhaev). The scale of bribes, paid not only in cash but in kind as well (expensive carpets, flocks of sheep driven from collective farms to Tashkent), was enormous. The amounts received by Kurbanov were not established with any precision but according to rough estimates amounted to several hundred thousand rubles per annum. The bribes for individual favours ranged from 25,000 or 30,000 to hundreds of thousands of rubles (Nasreddinova would take up to 100,000 rubles for a pardon).

Both Kurbanov and Pulat Khodzhaev received extraordinarily mild sentences by Soviet standards: Kurbanov was given eight years', and Khodzhaev 10 years' imprisonment. (By way of comparison, the head of a school of motoring in the Bauman District of Moscow was sentenced in 1977 to seven years' imprisonment for taking 25–30 rubles from every learner-driver he helped to pass the driving test: in all he had obtained 1,050 rubles by this means). Once it is realized that the sentences were handed down by the USSR Supreme Court and agreed upon in conjunction with the Central Committee of the CPSU then they can be seen as further evidence of the forbearance with which the top hierarchy treats corruption in the upper echelons of the governing establishment.

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Finally, the latest case of corruption in the administration of a Soviet republic to be brought into the open took place in Armenia in 1976, when the first and second secretaries of Armenia's central committee were removed from their posts. The reason given for their dismissal was that they had allegedly encouraged private enterprise in the republic. But this was mere window-dressing for the fact that the epic scale of bribery holding sway among high-ups in Armenia had become too widely known, both locally and in Moscow. Nevertheless, Moscow was unwilling to unearth yet another scandal implicating a member of the CPSU Central Committee and the Party and state leadership in a whole republic.

AT first sight, there would seem to be no opportunity for bribery under the Soviet economic system, where the activities of every administrator are strictly circumscribed and he is left with no room for manoeuvre in arriving at managerial or executive decisions. However, in practice things are very different: the very fact that the management of industry is excessively centralized and regulated has resulted in bribery becoming such a widespread phenomenon that it may be considered not the exception but the rule, a second and unofficial method of payment for goods and services. The essence of this payment system consists in the fact that any person in a position of responsibility, on whom the solution of a particular problem depends, is rewarded with bribes for the timely and meticulous performance both of those activities which come within the range of his professional duties and of activities which break the law. The unofficial system of remuneration is universal and there is not a single industrial undertaking in the USSR (apart, perhaps from the military-industrial complex) capable of effective performance without having recourse to it. The system operates throughout industry and trade, with only minor variations.

IN industry the official system imposes an inflexible burden, that of carrying out planned objectives before deadlines. The government planning departments, however, do not ensure a given undertaking the necessary supplies of raw materials and plant or equipment. This means that industrial managers are left in no position to acquire the missing resources in conformity with Soviet law and that bribery is the only means open to them. They are obliged to bribe officials in the state administration in order to bypass existing regulations and laws and obtain supplies of items they are short of. The fact that the bribery has become part and parcel of everyday dealings between representatives of industry and state officials is borne out by a study of the Soviet press (out of 13 articles on bribery published in *Pravda* during 1977 five dealt with this type of bribe, i.e. more than one-third) and by examining (unpublished) court reports. These sources enable one to sketch the typical features of this kind of corruption.

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The bribe-takers are top and middle-ranking officials in ministries, planning and supply bodies. The bribe-givers are always the official representatives of various types of industrial enterprise, who usually hand over the monies involved directly, without the aid of an intermediary. The most outstanding characteristic of this kind of activity is that those who pay the bribes have no direct personal motive for doing so.

The amounts paid out to middle-ranking officials are not very great and are often surprisingly miserly (restaurant invitations, cognac, French perfume, etc.). On the other hand, the bribes received by responsible members of the state administration are much greater and may range from a thousand to tens of thousands of rubles. (The deputy director of the supervisory board of the Ministry for the Automobile Industry and his closest colleagues would countersign requisition notes for the supply of vehicle spare parts for no less than 1,000 rubles per requisition; what is more, their regular clients rented a flat in Moscow for the ministry officials to hold parties and orgies in; in another incident, the deputy director and chief engineer of a construction trust supplying state farms with building materials would receive from 20,000 to 40,000 rubles from each farm it had dealings with.[8]

A manager who has already secured a requisition order for raw materials or equipment cannot in practice get the note countersigned without bribing the person at the suppliers who is responsible for arranging consignments and deliveries. The fact that this type of bribe has become an essential feature of industrial life is apparent from any study of the Soviet press, from local papers up to *Pravda*, in which one article[9] told of an official in the Novolipetsk Metallurgical Combine who took bribes on a systematic basis (ranging from bottles of champagne to a complete kitchen range) for releasing supplies of metal against despatch notes. This leads the author to conclude that ALL representatives of industry, commerce and agriculture who travel for supplies on behalf of their employers are BOUND to give bribes.

There is one further kind of bribe not directly connected with the production process but which is paid by all, in both industry and trade, without exception: to the auditors and representatives of higher authority. In most cases, this category of bribe is not in cash but in kind (for example, the deputy director of the supervisory board and the auditor of the Ministry for the Fish Industry who were sent out to conduct an on-the-spot investigation of theft and embezzlement in certain fisheries, returned to Moscow with 17 kilograms of caviare and an unidentified quantity of smoked sturgeon). But the most widespread type of bribery is in the form of hospitality (restaurant

[8] *Pravda*, 9 April and 4 Dec. 1977.
[9] Ibid. 26 June 1977.

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invitations, picnics, parties and orgies). One of the most typical, out of the vast number of cases reported in the Soviet press, was published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in 1975.

A major construction firm in Kuibyshev built an entire complex of buildings, including a small hotel and sauna facility for entertaining local high-ups and important visitors. The staff included a number of room-service maids, whose duties also included sleeping with the guests. To this end the security staff, recruited from among professional boxers, brought young girls down to the hotel, seduced, raped them and photographed them in the act and then used the pictures to blackmail them into prostitution. The victims protested to the prosecutor's office but in vain, since the hotel clientèle was not limited to visiting bigwigs (this much was reported in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*) but also included the local *oblast'* Party committee heads and members of the prosecutor's office staff (which was not reported in the newspaper but which is known to the present writer from reliable sources).

Soviet managers have extremely limited rights over the disposal of assets of the undertakings in their charge and have virtually no rights to make use of cash holdings. Nonetheless, they do succeed in finding funds—illegally, naturally—to pay bribes. The documentation of hundreds of trials can be analyzed to show that there are three major ways of achieving this.

The first way is for members of the staff who have been duly forewarned to receive a bonus for an order made by the director or non-repayable financial assistance through their trade union committee, but immediately to hand over the sums involved to trusted members of the management. The second way is for a person whose services are needed by the undertaking to be fictitiously recruited to the staff and to receive a regular salary, even though he may never be obliged to attend his alleged place of work (and may often live thousands of kilometres away). A third practice is for a group of workers to be paid, under the piece-rate system that prevails in the USSR, for work that they have not done. They then pay these monies to a confidential agent of the board.

Such is the way the machinery of corruption operates in industry.

TRADE in the Soviet Union is more deeply in the grip of bribery than industry. Nevertheless, although the causes of corruption in industry and commerce are the same, the machinery of bribery in commerce has certain features of its own. In the first place the heads of commercial undertakings are forced to proffer bribes to larger numbers of individuals. Besides handing over amounts for issuing despatch notes releasing goods and for obtaining goods from suppliers, they also make regular payments to the militia, to the criminal investigation and prosecutor's offices, to control boards and auditors,

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and to the Party and state departments directly in charge of trade (heads of the departments concerned with trade in the district Party committees and *oblast'* Party committees, directors of departments of commerce in the local authorities at district and *oblast'* level, the ministries of trade, etc.). They are also burdened with exactions in kind made by the lower ranks of the ruling hierarchy.

The managers of wholesale centres who form the link between the producers of goods and the retail trading network can obtain such goods from the suppliers only with requisition notes obtained from the ministries or from departments of commerce at local authority level. In so doing, the payment of bribes to officials responsible for granting and drawing up requisition notes is a generally accepted custom. Then, when goods have been released in return for such notes, which have been prepaid and cleared through a bank, the wholesalers' representatives are similarly obliged to make illegal payments to individuals in charge of issuing the goods and to officials in charge of rail and road transport operations.

The system of unofficial payments does not end when the goods arrive at a wholesale depot: at this point it is the heads of the wholesale depots who become the recipients of bribes while the role of bribe-giver passes to representatives from the retail network who are supposed to receive goods in return for prepaid requisition notes.

Documentation from court proceedings confirms the fact that bribes in the commercial sector are passed directly, with no intermediaries (although Florent, head of the USSR Ministry of Trade Secretariat, was executed by firing squad in 1971 after being accused of acting as a go-between, making illegal payments). The scale of such bribes in the commercial sector, according to the same sources, is many times greater than that prevailing in industry and runs into hundreds of thousands of rubles. Thus, in the course of the trial of the director of a Moscow textile mill accused of taking bribes for issuing requisition notes for different types of cloth (averaging 1,000 rubles for each such note), it was established that wholesalers' representatives from Tadzhikistan sent monthly payments of some 100,000 rubles per wholesale depot to state officials in order to obtain the documents. But this is an example of an average-scale bribe paid to the intermediate-level bureaucracy, whereas according to documents from court proceedings involving knitwear factories (1963–65) and the "Tadzhikistan" shop in Moscow (1975–76) facts were established putting on record that bribes of up to 200,000 rubles were paid to senior state officials.

The hundreds of millions of rubles needed to pay for this titanic machinery of corruption are obtained from the sale of goods to the final link in the chain—the ordinary consumer. Any director of a retail outlet, even if you exclude his own ulterior motives (which of course one should not) is forced, in selling his wares, to recover

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the sums of money he has previously had to pay in giving bribes and which he will need later for other bribes and extortions on behalf of the authorities. There are three ways of getting money out of the consumer, each of them practised by all shops, restaurants and cafés.

The first one is pure deception, selling the consumer low-quality goods at high prices. The second is giving short measure or short weight, and the third consists in the retail sale of goods at high prices by prior arrangement with the consumer, who willingly agrees to pay prices that are higher than those marked up officially. Since high-quality goods are always hard to come by in the Soviet Union, there is a real possibility of selling them at prices of between 10 and 50 per cent higher than the official prices. Retail marketing of this type is conducted by the sales staff in the shops, and wholesale deals (sale of goods to professional speculators) are handled by the store managers.

The machinery of corruption in Soviet trade that we have described gives a fair, though still incomplete picture of the realities of the situation. Invariably, a person engaged for instance in trade who tries to break the established informal ground-rules behind these realities would either be cast out by the system or brought to heel. This has been demonstrated often enough in practice. One of the more convincing experiments which bears it out was mounted by the Moscow Party Committee. In the 1960s the Moscow Committee tried to clean up marketing by sending dozens of retired officers, who were also Party members and had high enough Army pensions to render them less open to temptation, to work as shop and restaurant managers.

One of these was Lieutenant-Colonel Boris Adamov (who died in a labour camp while serving his sentence), a man of unimpeachable honesty, accustomed to strict compliance with orders and with the letter of the law. He was appointed director of the major grocery store known as Gastronom No. 5. On appointment, he began refusing to pay bribes, with the result that the wholesale centres stopped supplying the store with the lines it required. This meant that the agreed monthly turnover rates could not be maintained and that the sales staff consequently failed to receive their full wages. This in turn led to the latter making up the shortfall by embezzling shop stock, taking advantage of the fact that they were not responsible for losses. In their turn, those in charge of the district department of trade who were no longer receiving their monthly rake-off began to shower Adamov with threats of proceedings for recovery of goods. Adamov gave up and agreed to temporize; though he refused to take part in the corruption himself he allowed his highly experienced deputy to run matters in accordance with the unwritten rules of the system.

During the trial of Adamov, the present writer made the acquaintance

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of a friend of his, Colonel M., who had been named head of a large textile store. He too refused to give bribes or hoodwink customers, and ran into the same problems as Adamov. However, being a strong-minded individual, he refused to compromise. What happened then was that the heads of *Tekstiltorg*, the state textile-trading corporation, got together with the sales staff in the shop and had him framed for bribery: by blackmailing him with the threat of bringing his alleged doings to the notice of the prosecutor's office, they forced him into quitting his job of his own accord. Adamov and Colonel M. had kept in touch with their colleagues and were firm in stating that all of the retired officer appointees without exception had gone through a similar experience; some of them had begun to observe the unwritten rules and engaged in bribery, while others had been rejected by the system and had to quit.

IN the 60 years of the Soviet Union's existence, the country has gradually become more and more rotten with corruption, and in the 1960s and 1970s it turned into a kleptocratic state. This process has been inevitable and is part and parcel of any one-party dictatorship which controls the whole economy. It stems from the very nature of the monopoly of power underpinning the Communist Party apparatus, since the Party is subject to no limitations under the law, is in no way dependent on the people's will and is not controlled by public opinion. As the experience of all such dictatorships shows this type of system is bound to lead to the moral decadence and the corruption of the ruling hierarchy, and consequently to the spread of corruption to every sphere of society. The efforts of higher authority in the USSR to combat the phenomenon cannot produce positive results because corruption is inherent in the very nature of the regime. Its structure makes inevitable the progressive aggravation of the corruption process in the Soviet state and society.

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# Reminiscences of a Soviet Lawyer

Yuri Luryi

IN 1968 I acted as a defence lawyer in a political trial. At two hearings the Leningrad City Court tried a large group of people who had formed an underground anti-Soviet organization called the All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of the People [abbreviated in Russian VSKhSON]. I would like to say a little about the case. I shall not give a scholarly analysis of the event, but simply share the impressions I gained from my participation in the case, which are still fresh in my memory.

A SMALL group of young people, mainly classmates from Leningrad University, reached the decision that they had no right to remain aloof and unconcerned when their native land was in danger. After studying and discussing the situation in the country, they came to the general, unanimous conclusion that their country was on the road to ruin. The political order had become a despotism. In place of the Stalin personality cult, the cult of Khrushchev had arisen. The country's economy was *in extremis* and only holding out because the majority of the population were being kept in a state of semi-starvation and beggary. The destruction of all ideals had led to an unprecedented moral decline in every aspect of life. It was impossible to remain indifferent: they had to act. One of them was later to say at his trial: "Tell me, citizen judges, what was a son of his native land to do in this situation? Russia is my fatherland. My mother. Could I look on calmly as my mother perished?"

So, between late 1963 and 1964 the foundations of the Russian Social-Christian organization were laid. Its members were sometimes referred to as the "Demokhristiyane"—Democrat-Christians, to which they did not object.

Outwardly it all looked very impressive. A Programme was drawn up, a Charter composed and adopted. Both documents contained many interesting ideas. All the vices in the Soviet system were pointed out, and the amoral and anti-human essence of communist ideology noted. Methods were suggested, though none too precisely defined, for saving and developing the country by means of Christianization on a national scale. A complex, formalized, solemn ritual of inter-relationships between senior and junior members of the Union was devised and strictly observed. Different methodical instructions existed, traditionally known as "precepts": the precept on conspiracy, the precept on propaganda. According to its Charter the Union was a "military-political" organization. It therefore had a detailed and elaborate structure. There were to be "sections," "platoons," "battalions" and even "corps." But, as the Russian proverb has it, "paper is easy to write on." Divisions and

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armies might equally well have been "brought in" to the Union's structure.

Over the three years of its existence the Union recruited hardly 100 members. In its entire existence it did not undertake a single anti-Soviet act. The whole of the Union's work, the whole of its activity over those three years consisted of recruiting new members, and increasing its fund of literature which could not be obtained in Soviet libraries and bookshops. For instance, translations into Russian were done and copies made, or sometimes simply copies were made of the original, of Clarkson's *History of Russia*, D. Muller's *Using the Past*, Ortega y Gasset's *The Revolt of the Masses*, several works by Berdyaev, Djilas's *New Class*, N. Struve's *Christians in the USSR*, and others. No platoons, no battalions! Not a single leaflet, demonstration, connexion with other countries—nothing!

But the Leningrad KGB could not possibly be satisfied with such an ordinary story. They had to create the impression that they had uncovered a big, operative military (or at least militarized) organization. At the risk of their lives the heroic *Chekisty* caught this powerful organization and thereby saved the socialist state. Now, of course, they could count on big rewards, medals and promotion to higher ranks. So, then, to create and preserve the illusion that a highly important organization had been crushed, it was decided to divide its members into two groups for the purposes of the trial.

The first to be tried were the "general staff," as the KGB began to call the Union's four founders and leaders for greater effect: Igor Ogurtsov and Mikhail Sado, both orientalists; Evgeny Vagin, a literary critic specializing in Pushkin, and Boris Averochkin, a lawyer. All were found guilty of "betrayal of the motherland" (Article 64 paragraph (a) of the Russian Criminal Code), forming an anti-Soviet organization (Article 72 of the same Code) and engaging in anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda (Article 70). The court sentenced Ogurtsov to 15 years' deprivation of freedom, the first half of his term to be spent in a prison cell instead of a camp. Sado was sentenced to 13 years' deprivation of freedom with the same proportion to be spent in a prison. Vagin was given 10 years, and Averochkin eight years' deprivation of freedom in a strict-regime camp. The court ordered that, in addition to his 15 years of imprisonment, Ogurtsov should spend five more years in exile.

The KGB and the Leningrad City Court based their qualification of the actions of Ogurtsov and his friends as falling under Article 64 of the Criminal Code ("betrayal of the motherland"—interesting to note that a conspiracy against the government of Khrushchev or Kosygin or Brezhnev is also a betrayal of the *motherland*!) on the following strictly formal argument: the concept of betrayal of the motherland, as defined by Article 64, includes any act such as "a plot aimed at seizing power." All the members of the All-Russian Social-Christian Union signed its Charter when they were admitted, thereby pledging themselves to observe its requirements. The Charter, meanwhile, contained a direct statement to the effect that the Union was a military-political organization whose aim was the liberation of peoples from the communist yoke and the

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overthrow of dictatorship by armed struggle. Which, strictly speaking, was a plot aimed at seizing power. A simple syllogism. Evidently in dividing the case of the Union's members into two parts the KGB was bearing in mind the psychological effect of the testimony of the organization's leader, Igor Ogurtsov. Not only did Ogurtsov not dismiss all attempts to demonstrate the real, *practical* significance of his organization; he even involuntarily exaggerated it himself. There may have been two reasons for this: an overestimation of the organization by its *founder*, which is not an uncommon occurrence, and a *fearlessness* which made Ogurtsov loathe the very idea of trying to belittle the importance of his actions, thus laying himself open to the charge of cowardice. Of course, this is not a complete explanation. But however that may be, the prosecutor not only demanded for Ogurtsov a sentence of 15 years in camps to be followed by five years in exile, but went on to explain at great length that he could have demanded the death penalty, and that only " the humaneness of socialist justice " had restrained him from taking that step.

PASSING from the splendid words and resolute plans in the Programme and the Charter to the actual activities of the Union over the three years of its existence, it is at once evident that Ogurtsov and his supporters could no more have attempted to " seize power " or " overthrow dictatorship " than, say, an amoeba could ever win the Nobel Prize.

I have already pointed out that the whole of the Union's activities, and even those of its founders and leaders, were mainly confined to the duplicating of so-called " anti-Soviet literature," that is, to actions which are not criminally punishable in any truly democratic country. Over the few years of its existence, the All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of the People came to consist, not of anything approaching hundreds, but merely of a few dozen members. The duplicated literature was not disseminated around the country, nor even around Leningrad; as a rule it did not go outside the organization. This so-called " *military*-political " organization possessed no weapons, with the exception of an old, rusted revolver. In reply to a question by a defence counsel, a commission of forensic experts was obliged to admit that the revolver, a Mauser dating from the First World War (or perhaps even earlier, I do not remember exactly) was unusable for precision shooting. Furthermore, Stanislav Konstantinov had acquired the revolver a year before becoming acquainted with the organization. There had been no active operations in three years! There had been no prospects and there would have been none in the foreseeable future. The plans laid out in the Programme, and the obligations in the organization's Charter were, as they had been right from the outset, not a reality but a sweet dream. The only and bitter reality was that the Union's members had been called to account for that dream. The sentence referred to the Mauser revolver but omitted to say that the revolver was unfit for use. Nevertheless it did make mention of the mythical " battalions " and " corps " of which the Union allegedly consisted. The court showed, of course, that the members of the organization had intended to " overthrow the Soviet system," and, of course, by " force of arms." But what had they done

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with this end in view? Did the defendants' *real* activities bear out the *threat* they apparently represented, and the alleged *earnestness* of their intentions? The court elegantly, but at the same time decisively, brushed this question aside: "having agreed to the anti-Soviet demands of the programme and the Charter, the defendants *acted until the very moment of their exposure with a view to the practical implementation of their criminal schemes.*" Nothing concrete. It was all rather hazy, but it had the outward appearance of gravity: and wasn't that enough? After all, they had acted. How? It was very simple: with a view to practical implementation!

It should be noted that certain of the defendants denied having participated even in matters such as the circulation of literature or the recruiting of new members to the Union, and some of the defence lawyers conducted their defence of these people in a very skilful manner, disputing many points in the indictment with reasoned argument, in most cases challenging every count except formal membership of the Union.

But here, one-eyed Themis stopped up her ears, and remained utterly deaf to the arguments of the defence. In the verdict there was not a single reference to the fact that certain of the charges were disputed and that concrete arguments were offered against concrete accusations. This was a gross violation of the principle of justice. The fact of the matter is that in the USSR the verdict is not simply a statement of "guilty or not guilty." It includes a sentence, and it is passed not by a jury but by a court presided over by a professional judge (a judge and two assessors), and thus to all intents and purposes by the judge alone—for the assessors, as a rule, will respectfully and easily agree with him and sign the verdict and sentence he has drawn up. A higher court of appeal will check that the verdict is legal and well-substantiated. But how can this appeal court check whether the court had good reason to disagree with the defence's arguments or with objections raised by the defendants themselves against the charges, when not a word about these is mentioned in the verdict, in spite of the fact that this is required by the Russian Code of Criminal Procedure (Articles 304 and 314 of the RSFSR Code of Criminal Procedure)?!

OGURTSOV and his friends were judged by one man and indicted by one man. The Public Prosecutor was the Procurator of Leningrad, Sergei Yefimovich Solovyev. The chairman's seat was occupied by a former assistant of Solovyev's, Nikolai Alexandrovich Yermakov. Sergei Solovyev had previously been chairman of this court, while Nikolai Yermakov had been a member of the court and secretary of the Party bureau, in other words, his chief's "right hand." When he was promoted to the higher post of Procurator of Leningrad, Solovyev recommended his Party assistant for his old job. This duo conducted the trial of Ogurtsov, Sado, Vagin and Averochkin in complete unanimity. The verdict of the court corresponded to the letter with the procurator's wishes.

The remaining 17 members of the Union were judged and indicted by women. The judge's seat was occupied by First Deputy Chairman of the Leningrad City Court, Nina Sidorovna Isakova. As a highly

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qualified lawyer, Isakova is a particularly striking specimen of the successful Soviet legal worker. Unmarried and with no children, she possesses a precise mind and a firm will. Expediency, in the shape of directives from above, is more important and sacred to her than any legislative principle. Nowadays, however, one has to know how to commit an unlawful act and at the same time give it the semblance of legality, so that outwardly it all appears perfectly decorous. This is a fine art, and Miss Nina Isakova has mastered it better than many of her colleagues.

On the prosecutor's bench at this trial sat a senior assistant to the Leningrad procurator "for the supervision of investigations in the state security organs," Inessa Vasilevna Katukova.[1] Katukova is a very beautiful woman. Her beauty was very striking and seemed particularly out of place when she was wearing her procurator's uniform and calling upon the court to deal out severe sentences. Inessa Katukova was always there as the assistant to her chief, the Procurator of Leningrad, Sergei Solovyev, when the latter personally supported the prosecution at a political trial. Three years later, during the world-famous trial that became known as "the case of the Leningrad aircraft hijackers," my client Eduard Kuznetsov would say to me: "Solovyev is a blockhead, but Katukova is really clever! Have you noticed how she gives him a nudge when he gets entangled in too much lying?" Soon this beautiful woman would be standing alongside Solovyev, echoing his demand for the death penalty for Eduard Kuznetsov and Mark Dymshits.

Here, at the trial of the 17, the Articles of the Criminal Code under which the defendants had been charged provided for a maximum of seven years' punishment, and by the end of the trial Inessa Katukova, calm and serene as ever, would demand penalties of deprivation of freedom for all 17 for a total amount of 60 years.

But that was 20 days later. Meanwhile, in room 48 on the second floor of 16, Fontanka Embankment, where the Leningrad City Court is housed, the participants in the trial were taking their seats. The session was about to commence. As is customary, the procurator sat on a raised platform along with the judge. The defence lawyers sat at their small desks two steps below, arranging themselves in whatever way was most convenient to them. The defendants were seated in the way most convenient to the special KGB guard. As well as the usual soldiers armed with rifles from an escort regiment (a specialized regiment of internal troops), specially trained "experts" from the KGB prison also take over the dock at trials like this. They alone have the right to decide how to place each of the defendants on their benches, who should be seated next to whom, and who should be kept farther apart. Without their permission and supervision a defence counsel cannot go and talk to his client during intermissions. At the begining of each day's session they take the defendants' copies of the indictment away from them, check to see that nothing has been hidden in them, a letter, for example, and pass the copies to us, the defence lawyers. At the end of the day the same procedure is enacted in reverse. Incidentally, in this respect we defence

[1] Katukova was assisted by a temporary aide, Gusev, a procurator from the department for the supervision of the court examination of criminal cases.

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counsel are no different from our clients: we too are forbidden to take our notes and papers out of the courtroom to work on them at home in the quiet of familiar surroundings. At the end of each day's session we hand our files over to a "special department" which returns them to us the next morning just before the start of the session. It must be said that this procedure greatly hampers defence lawyers; but no-one pays the slighest attention to our timid objections.

Whereas Ogurtsov's case was stamped "secret" and his trial took place at a closed session, the case of the 17 members of the All-Russian Social-Christian Union was formally tried at a public session. By "formally" I really do mean "formally." In actual fact, even we defence lawyers needed a special pass, in the form of a piece of pink cardboard stamped with some incomprehensible code, in order to get into the courtroom. Were such a scrap of cardboard to fall into the hands of some foreign newspaper correspondent he would never guess what it was. Even if he were told, it would still be impossible to prove it. There is not a single letter on that scrap of cardboard to indicate that you have in your possession a pass admitting you to the Leningrad Private Temple of "Public Justice." The same passes admitted relatives of the accused and the specially selected public into the courtroom. I was curious to find out how these passes were issued. It seems that the KGB gives these cards out to district Party committees, and in limited quantities, and the committees distribute them to certain enterprises and institutions through their Party organizers, who are specially instructed as to who may and who may not be issued with such a pass. However, most of the public was admitted to the courtroom not by these pink passes but by official red I.D. cards. These people stood out by virtue of their smart clothes, their bearing, and the close attention they paid to all the other observers. They were, of course, acting as a claque and, whenever circumstances required, made a chorus of popular indignation or sarcastically laughed at one of the accused or his defence counsel.

MY clients Bochevarov and Konstantinov were two very different people, who had become members of the Union for very different reasons.

Georgy Bochevarov was a graduate of the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Leningrad University. He was the son of a Bulgarian communist and professional revolutionary. Right at the beginning of the 'thirties, his father had been sentenced to death in Bulgaria, had fled to the USSR, where he obtained work, and spent the last years of his life as a professor of political economy in one of the institutions in the city of Kuibyshev. It was here that he was arrested and shot. When the time came which people in the USSR, in an undertone of bitter humour, call "the Late Rehabilitation epoch," Bochevarov senior was posthumously declared innocent of any offence. His son once told me that to this day he is tormented by the memory of how he had earlier believed in his father's guilt and had once taken the liberty of reproaching his mother for having married an "enemy of the people." He had begun to gain insight into the truth during his first years as a student. He had read and thought a great deal, and his friendship with Igor Ogurtsov and Mikhail Sado had caused him to decide to devote his life to the salvation of his country.

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That was how Bochevarov came to join the All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of the People.

He envisaged the salvation of his country by way of the democratization of society, the Christianization of society and the revival of national consciousness. However, this way seemed neither clear-cut nor indisputable. Bochevarov had doubts too about the rightness of an illegal organization such as the Union. But when one day he expressed his misgivings, he was forced to agree with the opinion of his friends since he was not confident that his own argument was correct. He wrote many interesting historical works. In the verdict these works were enumerated as follows: "In 1965 and 1966 he wrote five articles of malicious, anti-Soviet content for the organization, entitled: 'The Present Situation in the Communist Parties of Europe,' 'Contradictions of Liberalization in the Countries of Eastern Europe.' 'Are the Aims of the October Revolution Realizable?,' 'The Causes of the Stalin Personality Cult,' and the first part of a 'Short Outline of the History of the CPSU.'" He had also started work on "the second part of this lampoon." In January 1967 he "wrote another anti-Soviet article entitled 'Leninism, Trotskyism and Stalinism.'" The verdict contained not a single line explaining why the court found one or other of Bochevarov's works "anti-Soviet" and wherein exactly their anti-Soviet character lay.

At his trial Bochevarov pleaded guilty and condemned the illegal aspect of his activities. He did not, however, admit to having revised any of his personal beliefs. He was sentenced to two and a half years in camps and served his sentence in full. I have had meetings with him since his release. First he worked in Luga, a town 140 kilometres from Leningrad which has long been the traditional residence of recently-released prisoners who are deprived of the right to live nearer to Leningrad than 100 kilometres for the first few years after their discharge. Then he returned to Leningrad. Later on I read in a newspaper (not a Soviet paper, of course) that the KGB had carried out a search at the home of one of the editors of the *legal* (*samizdat*) journal *Veche*, Georgy Bochevarov.

THE circumstances in which my second client, Stanislav Konstantinov, came to be a member of the All-Russian Social-Christian Union were rather curious. He was not a bad young man, but he had a weakness for making up all kinds of fantastic stories, especially those that lent him an air of mystery in the eyes of his audience. For the last year Stanislav had been working on an excursion boat that plied between Leningrad and the island of Valaam. He was a guide and librarian. Happening to learn that some friends had a decrepit, rusty old Mauser which had belonged to the grandfather of one of them, he literally begged them to sell him the gun, which they did. Its acquisition made him feel an incredibly romantic figure. In conversation with a friend (Ustinovich, a member of the Union) he invented a story about the existence of a secret, well-armed political organization somewhere in a suburb of Leningrad, making out that he, Konstantinov, was its leader. What Konstantinov did not know was that the Union existed and that Ustinovich was a member of it.

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Ustinovich told Mikhail Sado about Konstantinov. What followed was like the most banal of farces. Sado met Konstantinov and without bothering to investigate him began pressing him to merge his own "organization" with the All-Russian Social-Christian Union and to pool their weapons. Konstantinov had not the courage to confess that his entire "organization" was the fruit of his own fantastic imagination, and, at a loss to know how to extricate himself from the situation, carried on with his fantasy. Finally, at the insistence of Sado and Ustinovich, he formally joined the Union and "pooled" his weapons with theirs, giving Sado his Mauser, after which no one ever set eyes on him again until his arrest, and he went to tremendous lengths not to meet any Union members on the street or anywhere else. Although he succeeded in hiding from Sado, he failed to conceal himself from the KGB. Stanislav Konstantinov spent 10 months in prison before trial, and since this was the term to which the court sentenced him, he was released as soon as the sentence was announced. I have not met him since.

His release was, I think, in the interests of those who had arrested him. The comedy of Konstantinov's case had introduced a note of disharmony into the theatrical production whose chief aim was to demonstrate to the full the enormity of the organization that had been uncovered, and the considerable threat it represented, using all the stage-props and techniques of exaggeration at the director's disposal.

I WAS sitting with my back to the dock, watching Mikhail Sado being brought into the courtroom under escort to be interrogated as a witness. He had already been tried and convicted. Suddenly I heard a strange noise behind me. I looked round and was stupefied: all seventeen men in the dock had risen to their feet to salute their leader and friend. The repentant and the unrepentant, those who had pleaded guilty and those who refused to do so, those who feared punishment and those who were ready for it—all of them, ignoring the court, the escort, the KGB warders, had stood before their leader and chief comrade who was condemned to long years of suffering, had stood in accordance with the old ritual of the now-crushed Union, as if to demonstrate by this gesture that they were with him heart and soul, that they were the same as ever despite the prison bars. And that is how I shall always remember them.

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# Is There Such a Thing as Dissident Literature?

**Michael Heller**

AT first this question seems pointless: the Biennale held in Venice in November and December of 1977 was devoted to dissident culture, that other, unofficial culture—literature, painting and cinema —of Eastern Europe. The Venice Biennale was, as it were, an official recognition of the phenomenon and the term "dissident." However, even in Venice the most important thing of all was left unexplained. Alberto Moravia: "The Soviet Union has three types of literature: official literature, underground literature and literature in exile." In recent years writers and journalists have talked of "two Soviet literatures": "free" and "official," *"samizdat"* as opposed to *"gosizdat."* It is the lack of understanding of what exactly "dissident" literature is which accounts for the absence of a term, or rather, for the abundance of terms. It was not Soviet writers or the "dissidents" themselves who first coined the term that was used in Venice and is now used more and more widely. Presumably this word, which originated in the West, was taken up by the Soviet authorities because of its foreign sound. There is more stigma attached to a foreign word: it sounds like a nickname. There have been instances in the past when rebels have been given nicknames by their enemies, such as the "sans-culottes" or the "gueux," which they have turned into compliments.

In this case, however, the absence of a term is evidence of the lack of a general criterion by which to determine what "dissident" literature is.

A BRIEF historical digression is necessary in order to understand this extremely typical phenomenon of Soviet society.

In pre-revolutionary Russia there was no concept of what we today call "dissident" literature; there were political publications by *emigrés* and banned literary works. If we are to trust Hegel proclaiming that quantity changes into quality, then is is relevant that after the 1905 revolution and the easing up of censorship, when all the works by Russian writers previously banned were published, they would all have fitted into one volume. Today they would fill a library.

The October revolution took place in the freest country in the world, according to Lenin's words in April of that year. From the very first days of the revolution the party which had just come to power began a policy of eliminating freedom in every sphere of life, not least in the sphere of literature. The decree introducing censorship—temporarily, of course, just until the Soviet regime had gained complete

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control—came into force 10 days after the *coup d'état*. More ominous still was the personal intervention in literary matters of the leader of the revolution.

Historians have not yet come up with a formula showing the direct correlation between the degree of interest government leaders take in literature and the degree of freedom writers enjoy. Such a formula would be highly instructive.

Documents have survived which contain hints of the guiding role Nicholas I played in the sphere of literature. However, Nicholas Pavlovich was an enthusiast interested in certain writers rather than in literature in general, although he did have one or two ideas on fine art. Nicholas I's successors lost all interest in poetry and prose. The leaders of the Bolshevik Party, on the other hand, themselves wielders of pens and, like all good Marxists, looking on themselves as connoisseurs of literature, revived Nicholas's tradition. Boris Zaitsev recalls in his memoirs how, when he asked the president of the *Mossoviet*, L. Kamenev, to release a writer who had been arrested, he was asked "What's his name?" "Andrei Sobol," Zaitsev answered. "Oh!" piped up the communist literary expert, "he can't write, let him do a little time." One can hear the echo of the gendarmes' shouts in Lenin's quite recently published letters to Lunacharsky and Pokrovsky when Mayakovsky's poem "150 Million" first appeared. Angered by the Futurists' portrayal of world revolution, Lenin asks: "Ought not this be banned?" and answers his own question with "Yes, it *must* be."

It was immediately discovered that banning something was easy. In 1921 A. V. Lunacharsky gave a theoretical basis for the necessity and inevitability of banning certain works of art:

> To most people the idea of revolution is firmly linked with the idea of freedom . . . Whereas in fact there is not one type of revolution which creates a regime of freedom—revolution cannot create such a regime. Even a socialist revolution, in its first stages, has to reinforce the spirit of its own particular militarism, to reinforce the dictatorship of the governing power and even, in a manner of speaking, its police character. (*The Press and Revolution*, No. 1, 1921.)

Lunacharsky's article "The Freedom of the Printed Word and the State" underlined the inevitable lack of freedom of the printed word under a proletarian government. This lack of freedom extended beyond the mere banning of books (by now the first index of banned books, including works by Plato and Tolstoy, had made an appearance) to the control of those who wrote them. This proved difficult.

It was difficult first of all because freedom was begining to have an effect. The first decade of the twentieth century was the freest in the entire history of Russian literature; this partly explains its remarkable flowering at that time and the advent of the "silver age."

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Transforming free literature into disciplined literature was no easy task; moreover, there was no disciplinary apparatus. The technique for controlling art was only in its early stages of development. Victor Shklovsky, with his gift for laconic expression at the beginning of the 1920s—a gift never to return thereafter—wrote in 1923: "The greatest misfortune of Russian art is that it is not allowed to function normally like a heart in a body but is regulated like a train timetable." (*The Gait of the Horse.*)

EVGENY ZAMYATIN, whose importance in Russian literature has still not been properly appreciated, was the first to point out that literature can only ever be, in today's terminology, "dissident." Zamyatin calls it heretical. "True literature can never be produced by efficient, reliable civil servants; it can only be produced by madmen, hermits, heretics, dreamers and rebels." This article, written in 1921 and entitled "I am afraid," was to become a prophetic warning, a warning firstly that "sensible, reliable" literature becomes so much paper, something which "is read today and tomorrow is used as toilet paper." Secondly, it was a warning that the new government after the revolution would not radically change anything if it expected its literature to "serve" the ruling classes. In his last public appearance Alexander Blok spoke about this danger to "the left" from the revolutionaries who had come to power:

> We could hear Belinsky's infantile babble over Pushkin's deathbed. This babble seemed to us the complete antithesis of, and completely hostile to Count Benckendorff's polite voice. It would have been too painful for all of us if it had turned out to be not so. (*Complete Works in Eight Volumes* Vol. 6, p. 166.)

Belinsky's infantile babble was transformed into a shout, a command, a directive on how to write. The 1920s stand out in Soviet literature as the time when writers were taking a more active role in the fight against freedom. They were volunteers in Attila's army. Their language became more and more vehement. "It was by accident that we gave Bulgakov, who is in league with the bourgeoisie, the chance to squeal; and he squealed. He won't get another chance", said Mayakovsky at a discussion on the staging of *White Guard* at the Moscow Arts Theatre in October 1926. Mayakovsky's friend and mentor and an employee of OGPU, Osip Brik, ended his critique of Yury Olesha's *Envy* with the following words: "It's too early for complaints; first we must deal with the final blow" (*Novyi LEF,* No. 7, 1928). Another critic asserted that members of the Formalist school "should be sentenced to ideological execution for their systematic, ideologically harmful work" (M. Gelfand, *The Press and Revolution,* No. 2, 1930). Critic and censor S. Ingulov takes the idea a stage further: "Action should follow criticism—arrests, trials, harsh sentences, physical and moral execution" (*Krasnaya Niva,* No. 19, 1928).

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Alongside the growth of threats, which were soon to become more than mere threats, came a gradual process of voluntary enslavement by the writers themselves. It was as if they could not wait to be forcefully restrained; they were eager to eliminate all the grains of freedom still within themselves, to destroy themselves, to conform. " I have restrained myself by stamping on the throat of my own song," Mayakovsky proudly announced. Writers fell over themselves to go down on their knees and confess to sins real and imaginary, to submit. At one time the Russian intelligentsia had greeted with indignation Dostoevsky's call to " Submit, proud man! ", meaning, of course, submission before God. Now the Soviet intelligentsia was falling over itself to submit and to tell others to submit. " I know," stated Yury Olesha, " that a writer ought to be the spokesman for the ideology of the rising class." Boris Pasternak delicately called this process " joyful ". " The idealist-intellectual composed and published slogans about the joy of his decline." The intelligentsia joyfully hastened its own decline. Its ideal, in the words of N. Tikhonov, was to become " quiet, useful and as simple as iron nails."

Reaching the " iron nails " meant throwing off several bourgeois " prejudices ". The engineer Shpekterov, the hero of Kaverin's *The Artist is Unknown,* lays down a new moral code. " Morality, I haven't got time to think about that word. I'm busy. I'm building Socialism. But if it came to the point where I had to choose between morality and trousers, I'd choose trousers." Having chosen trousers, it was necessary to go one step further still. Gorky writes, in a letter to E. Kuskova, " . . . I absolutely loathe ' truths ' which are 99 per cent falsehood and lies." Gorky categorically protests against " blinding people and stopping up their ears with the odious, poisonous dust of everyday truth " (*Novyi Zhurnal,* Vol. XXXVIII). It is in this letter, dated 22 January 1929, that the basis of socialist realism is set forth. Truth is seen as " humdrum ", " poisonous " and " shallow "; Gorky eulogizes the " truth " which does not yet exist, " which man himself is creating ".

Towards the end of the 1920s most of Soviet literature turned away from the " old morality ", from " everyday truth " and, under the authoritative patronage of Gorky and Mayakovsky, went over completely to the victors' camp. A handful of writers such as M. Bulgakov, A. Platonov, M. Zoshchenko and O. Mandelstam, continued to search for the truth of their time and remained heretics. Finally, a group of writers tried to find a way of joining the victors' camp while still retaining certain rights. " Give us at least a glimpse of freedom, the chance to choose, and we will try to fit in, we will try to enter into life again," begged Marietta Shaginyan in *The Writer is Sick* (1927). It seems to her that she is asking very little, a very small price in return for a promise of faithful service, a promise to fit in. She begs for art to be given the chance to " dream prophetic

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dreams", "not to have to be kept vigil over, day and night, candle in hand."

The best account of this group of writers' feelings is to be found in N. Erdman's play *Suicide,* never published or staged in the Soviet Union. "We visit one another," the play's hero Podsekalnikov says to his conquerors, "and tell one another that we find life hard, because it's easier for us if we can say that we find life hard. For God's sake don't take away our last lifeline—let us say that we find life hard, even if it is only in a whisper like this: life is hard, comrades! I beg you in the name of a million people, allow us that whisper."

But the 1920s, when some people still had the right to whisper, came to an end. Pobedonosikov in Mayakovsky's *The Bathhouse* proclaims Soviet art's new motto—Don't be disruptive! Make things pleasing to the ear and the eye. Whatever you do, don't be disruptive; every whisper is disruptive. It is quite apparent that from the beginning of the 1930s one could no longer whisper, not even to oneself, "we find life hard." The novel, once called by Stendhal the mirror by the roadside, was expected—as was all literature and all art—to be the mirror by the side of the motorway that would be built in 10 years' time.

THE creation of the Union of Soviet Writers in 1934 is a notorious landmark in the history of Soviet literature. At the first congress of Soviet writers the nationalization of literature was formally announced. The Party seized the right to control literature from the middlemen and took over complete responsibility for it. This turnabout in events was not only significant by virtue of the official declaration that socialist realism was compulsory, it marked a change in the attitude to literature.

In 1934 Ilf and Petrov published a satirical article in *Pravda* called "Love should be a mutual thing." In it they wrote: "Not only do we have to love the Soviet authorities, we have to make them love us as well." A formula was born which set down the relationship between literature and the Soviet regime. After the revolution it had been a question of "accepting the Soviet regime", then towards the end of the 1920s it became a question (and at the time this was enough) of loving the Soviet regime. By the beginning of the 1930s this was no longer enough. Winning the affection of the Soviet regime was what counted. And that was no easy matter! Even a poet like Demyan Bedny, with his boundless love for the regime, complained that he was being asked to change his views overnight. "But I'm not an organ-grinder to strike up a new tune all at once."

If it was difficult for Demyan Bedny, who had spent a lifetime singing along to the Party's tune, to "strike up a new tune all at once", then it is easy to imagine the difficulties encountered by

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singers less experienced than Demyan Bedny. Winning the love of the Soviet regime was not only a question of "changing one's views"; it was a question of doing it overnight."

Soviet power, that is, the Party, is a very demanding and capricious mistress, like Cleopatra. Literature and writers have to divine her wishes. "Art," says one of the characters in *Suicide,* "is the red slave in the harem of the proletariat." If we substitute "Party" for "proletariat," this formula could not more aptly describe the relationship between the Party and literature, a relationship which had been growing since the beginning of the 1930s and whose foundations had already been laid in the 1920s. Olesha's *Envy* particularizes this relationship—Andrei Babichev, a representative of Soviet power, a member of the government and the chairman of a food consortium, picks up a drunken poet, Nikolai Kavalerov, off the streets and lets him have the use of his sofa. When Babichev grows angry he dethrones Kavalerov and boots him off his sofa.

IT was as a result of the nature of this relationship and the necessity of gaining the love of the authorities that the gamut of rejected and condemned literature grew rapidly wider. In the 1920s, in the words of E. Zamyatin, literature was divided into the official and the heretical. But from the 1930s, when the yardstick became "gaining the love of the Soviet authorities," the ability to "strike up a new tune all at once" and to "respond" unquestioningly to changes in the general Party line, all works of art which lost the Party's love or had never won it in the first place became *ipso facto* heretical, persecuted, banned.

A situation developed where the writer's intention ceased to have a role to play; against his will a writer might become, indeed, in many instances did become a heretic.

The behaviour of many Soviet writers who, during the "Great Terror," took an active part in the persecutions and loudly applauded the shootings and the arrests, did not save hundreds of them from death or thousands of books from being banned.

After Stalin's death it seemed, momentarily, as if the unbearable oppression must surely be lifted. The first hope was voiced in an article by Pomerantsev in *Novyi Mir* No. 12, 1953 called "Sincerity in Literature." V. Pomerantsev suggested a return to the old concept of literature—sincerity and confession. This demand was not only heretical, it constituted a blow which struck at the very foundations of society. For this reason it was firmly rejected and its author was no less firmly condemned.

LITERATURE'S answer to this hope being crushed was *samizdat.* Works not accepted by the official printing houses were copied out by hand and illegally distributed. In the 1970s *samizdat* began to be referred to as "dissident" literature.

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There is no doubt that the appearance of *samizdat* (as a kind of alternative) had an effect even on official publishing policy, especially after the success of certain *samizdat* books in the West. For a limited period of time the authorities turned a blind eye, letting certain details and allusions slip through into the official, censored press. There is also no doubt that *samizdat* had an effect on all Soviet writers in that it set the standard of what was possible and permissible. However, *samizdat* has done little to change the criterion by which the Soviet government judges all printed material: political considerations and the current Party line. This criterion remains "voluntarist," as *Pravda* likes to put it; in other words, there is no criterion.

Thus it was confusion in the heat of political turmoil at the top that made possible the miracle of the publication of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich.* Political considerations explain the transmutation of Sergei Esenin, individualist and rebel, into one of the founding fathers of socialist realism. At the same time, *In the Trenches of Stalingrad,* the finest Soviet novel to date about the war, a book which was studied in schools for dozens of years, was suddenly banned because Victor Nekrasov's behaviour ceased to please the Soviet authorities.

Arkady Belinkov saw socialist realism as "the literature which pleases the powers that be in the intervals between ideological plenary sessions." To paraphrase the author of *Yury Olesha,* one could say that "dissident literature" is the literature which does not please the Soviet powers that be in the intervals between ideological plenary sessions.

"Dissident literature" is, above all else, a negative definition, a definition of something that it is not; it includes books which the Soviet authorities do not like, or books by writers whom the Soviet authorities do not like or have ceased to like.

The lack of criterion, or voluntarism, and the political calculations of the Party leaders have resulted in the fact that books written in the hope of being officially published have joined the ranks of "dissident literature." Boris Pasternak handed *Dr Zhivago to Novyi Mir.* The publication of *The Keeper of Antiquities* by Y. Dombrovsky, *On the Irtysh* by S. Zalygin and even *The Master and Margarita* by M. Bulgakov was the result of the amazing coincidence that the manuscripts appeared at the right political moment. One could also include amongst "dissident literature" books which the censor has passed with the purpose of "letting off steam"—for example V. Shukshin's short stories in which he has allowed the whisper "we find life hard" most frequently in the past tense—"we used to find life hard." But "dissident literature" also embraces a small number of books which are written in defiance of censorship—either from without or within—books which are intended to be heretical. Most obvious in this category are *The Gulag Archipelago,* Nadezhda Mandelstam's memoirs and the works of Andrei Sinyavsky.

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THE variety of elements making literature unacceptable to the "Soviet authorities" and its continually changing content, has led to the birth of "pseudo-dissident" literature.

It has been said that a spoonful of tar can spoil a whole barrelful of honey: nowadays some people try to improve a barrel of tar with a mere spoonful of honey. Some go even further and assert that it is precisely this proportion of tar and honey that is healthy. There is a theory that 50 per cent truth is better than 100 per cent falsehood, which says that it is possible, indeed desirable, to write in proportions—50 per cent for the KGB and 50 per cent for the people—the so-called 50–50 theory. Sometimes writing concocted in this way angers the Soviet literary authorities and it is criticized, or even banned, placing it in the category of "dissident literature."

It is easy to refute the supporters of the theory that 50 per cent truth is better than 100 per cent falsehood. Where there is even 1 per cent falsehood there can be no art, since art is a means of understanding life. It is like saying that mathematics is mathematics when, for the benefit of the people, two times two, in certain political circumstances, makes five. Imagine a German writer turning works of art out in proportions—50 per cent for the Gestapo and 50 per cent for the people.

Not long ago some art forgers posed a problem for the experts. A unique example of ancient Chinese art—a bronze horse—was cut into six pieces. Each original piece of the ancient horse was used in the production of six completely new bronze horses. Are they now, in any sense, still relics of ancient Chinese art? Collectors are deeply interested in the answer to this question. It is even more difficult to answer the question of whether "pseudo-dissident" literature does more harm than good.

Soviet readers, deprived of the truth, look for it everywhere, even in molecules of honey dissolved in a whole barrel of tar. They even search for it in places where it cannot possibly be found—people suffering from scurvy would search for Vitamin C everywhere.

The question can be put another way—is it not possible to say that the poison contained in a lie is all the more potent because the molecules of truth in which it is couched make it less noticeable?

The study of the substance and essence of Soviet literature, like the study of Soviet society in general, is made much easier by the existence of other so-called socialist countries. They have shown the general nature of the principles which operate in a system of the Soviet type. They have shown how man is enslaved by the "lie" and the "half-truth"; and the role of truth in the fight for freedom.

Maxim Gorky, the man who has done more than anyone—Stalin excepted—to transform Russian literature into Soviet literature, stated that people needed a literature which said "Yes!"

True dissident literature, which should perhaps be better known simply as literature, is the literature which says "No!"

*Translated by Ann Waterson*

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# The Human Rights Movement in the USSR

**Ludmilla Alexeyeva**

THE human rights activists have now become the most representative group among the dissidents in the USSR, both because of their numbers and because of the repercussions their activities have had within the Soviet Union and abroad. The movement came into being just over 13 years ago. Its starting point can be rather arbitrarily set at 5 December 1965, the date of the first human rights demonstration with its slogan of "Respect the Constitution—the Fundamental Law of the Soviet Union." At the same time, but in a different continent, events were taking place which were very similar to ours in spirit and significance: the American civil rights movement was under way. It is striking that such similar social impulses were at work quite independently of one another in such differing societies as the United States and the Soviet Union. In both countries a handful of citizens was demanding real observance of the constitution. Individuals made great personal sacrifices in speaking out against infringements of the constitution which the majority of the population did not even notice or treated as something completely natural, since they had been perpetrated from the moment the constitution came into force and were a part of common governmental and social tradition. In both countries a few enthusiasts, acting not from political motives but rather from moral commitment, attracted a large following. But here the similarities come to an end; despite the proximity of their driving impulses and aims, the two movements followed completely different courses. The success of our movement has been incomparably less than that enjoyed by the civil rights movement in the USA, but our efforts have not been entirely fruitless.

The reason for the first public calls for the observance of citizens' rights in the Soviet Union was the arrest and trial of Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel. Sinyavsky and Daniel had published in the West works which painted an unusually critical picture of Soviet life. They were accused of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, and at the beginning of 1966 Sinyavsky was sentenced to seven years in a labour camp and Daniel to five. At the demonstration held on 5 December 1965 in anticipation of the trial, the slogan "Respect the Constitution" was used, and an open trial was demanded for Sinyavsky and Daniel, since, according to the Soviet Constitution, trials should be open; but years of Soviet practice have belied this provision in the Constitution.

The trial set in motion a chain reaction: trials—protests—trials of the protesters—more protests—and so on up to the present day. This is the history of the human rights movement as seen from outside. The

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arrests still go on; the old camps in Mordovia for political prisoners have become overcrowded; new ones have been added near Perm; Vladimir prison is never empty. In the last 10 years more than 700 people have been sentenced to imprisonment for their political views and about 200 have been sent to psychiatric hospitals. These figures have been compiled from the 49 issues of *A Chronicle of Current Events*— the human rights movement's bulletin of information which has been coming out continuously (if irregularly) since April 1968. But the "protesters" have not been stamped out; their numbers continue to grow. In the beginning—13 years ago—we were just a handful of Moscow intellectuals who knew one another by sight. Today the movement is no longer confined to Muscovites or intellectuals.

The trial of Sinyavsky and Daniel was the subject of the first open letters circulated in *samizdat*—that is, in the form of typewritten copies passed from hand to hand. It was in these letters that the right to freedom of speech was affirmed, and it was stated that creative work should be independent and not subject to jurisdiction. There were only a few such letters: 23 in all. They were signed by 80 people, nearly all of whom were friends or acquaintances of the convicted writers. These letters were the first in an ever-increasing stream of human rights documents distributed in *samizdat*. The stream of information about violations of civil rights as well as the actual protests against these violations have crossed the Soviet frontiers and have become known in the democratic countries. Among these documents are a large number of letters, written sometimes by one person, sometimes by a group, about individual political prisoners, but, as well as these, there are the demands of believers for true freedom of worship, the demands of various Soviet nationality groups for the freedom to develop their own culture and for national freedom in general, while another common demand is the right to choose one's place of residence, both in the USSR and abroad. In recent years several other social rights have been demanded, such as the right to work, the right to receive social security, et cetera.

I HAVE so far given an outline of the nature of the human rights movement. Its credo can be summed up in a few words: "Laws apply to the authorities as well as to the people." It is not a political movement; it is supported by people of various convictions, from socialists to monarchists, and by those with no particular political philosophy. It is an open movement operating within the law and as a matter of principle it eschews violent methods. Our only weapon is the word, publicity.

Academician Andrei Sakharov has become generally recognized as the man who expresses the spirit of the movement, but he is not its leader: our movement does not have leaders. It has no organizational framework: everyone acts as his conscience dictates and in

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his own name alone. The only widespread form of collective action is the writing of joint letters of protest against violations of human rights. It was four years after the birth of the human rights movement that the first association was formed—the Initiative Group for the Defence of Human Rights in the USSR. This is what the 15 people called themselves who joined together to make representations to international public opinion and to the United Nations—usually about people being arrested for holding certain beliefs. In the first two months of its existence six members of the group were subjected to repression; by now, 14 out of the 15 members of the group have suffered imprisonment, confinement in psychiatric hospitals, or have been forced to emigrate.

In 1970 Andrei Sakharov, Valery Chalidze and Andrei Tverdokhlebov founded the Committee for Human Rights. Their object was to educate people about their rights and appeal to official instances about unlawful sentences passed on dissidents. Likewise, few were the participants in the numerous independent associations which grew up later, such as Group-73, formed in 1973 (a charitable organization concerned with providing aid for political prisoners); the Soviet Section of Amnesty International formed in 1974; the five Groups to Promote the Implementation of the Helsinki Accord, formed in 1976 and 1977 (set up in Moscow by 10 people, in the Ukraine by nine, in Lithuania by five, in Georgia by six and in Armenia by three); the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights, formed in 1976 (three people); the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes in 1977 (six people); the Free Trade Union, and several others.

The activities of the human rights groups founded in 1976 and 1977 were based on international pacts and agreements approved and ratified by the Soviet Union, and, in the first instance, the Final Act of the Helsinki accord of 1975. Unlike the fuller and more precisely formulated human rights documents drawn up by the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act had strong repercussions in the USSR. This can be explained by the overall growth in the Soviet public's awareness of its rights thanks to *samizdat* and the work of foreign radio stations broadcasting to the Soviet Union and also to some extent by the fact that the humanitarian clauses of the Helsinki accord were the first international agreements on human rights to be published in the Soviet press. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and similar conventions are simply unknown to the majority of the Soviet population.

THE first of these human rights organizations was formed in May 1976 by 10 active participants in the human rights movement, and was called the Moscow Group to Promote the Implementation of the Helsinki Accord. They declared their intention to gather information

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on violations of the humanitarian clauses of the Final Act, to receive citizens' complaints of such violations, to process this material and to communicate it to the governments and peoples of countries which had signed the Helsinki accord.

All the foreign radio stations broadcasting to the Soviet Union transmitted information about the forming of the Moscow Helsinki Group, and thereby helped us to begin to gather facts from all over the USSR about violations of human rights by the Soviet authorities. We obtain information from the most remote places through the grapevine, sometimes a chain of many links, and from "envoys"—people who come to Moscow to appeal to the Group either on their own behalf, or on behalf of those who have authorized them. Of course, the members of the Group have no real power to aid petitioners; they can only pass on information to the Soviet government and to its co-signatories of the Helsinki accord. In order to do this the Group members arrange press conferences for foreign correspondents on a more or less regular basis. They were the first group to make a regular practice of this method; previously, such press conferences had been rare occurrences.

A measure of the success achieved by the Moscow Helsinki Group was the emergence of four analogous nationality groups. These were the first human rights groups to be formed in the other republics of the Soviet Union; up until this time such associations had been confined to Moscow. At first the Ukrainian and Lithuanian Helsinki Groups relied on the assistance of the Moscow Group, which introduced them through foreign correspondents to the public abroad.

Some participants in the nationality movements in the USSR (Ukrainians, Georgians, the Baltic Republics, as well as the Crimean Tartar and Meskhi groups) already had contacts with the human rights movement. First of all they had appealed to the Initiative Group and to the Committee for Human Rights, then to the Moscow Helsinki Group. The formation of independent Helsinki Groups in the Ukraine, Lithuania, Georgia and Armenia bears witness to the strengthening of the human rights element in these nationality movements.

ALTHOUGH in the past two years the tendency to associate has increased, the number of independent groups is still very small and these groups consist of no more than a few dozen people. However, their significance is immeasurably greater than their number and the number of their members would suggest. Looking from the West one can see that these associations have become bridges between the democratic West and an independent public voice in the Soviet Union, but from the West it is difficult to assess the role these associations play inside their own country. They collect information about infringements of human rights from all over the country, frequently assess it from a legal point of view and put it into

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intelligible written form, which enables it to be disseminated throughout the country in *samizdat* and by foreign radio stations broadcasting to the USSR, thus educating the Soviet people about their rights and forming a sense of civic consciousness at all levels of Soviet society. According to the calculations of Yuri Orlov (leader of the Moscow Helsinki Group) a fifth of the adult population in the USSR listens to foreign broadcasts. *Samizdat* does not have such a large readership, but it is nevertheless sizeable and is growing with every year. However, listening to foreign radio broadcasts and reading *samizdat* does not necessarily imply sympathy with the human rights movement, let alone active participation in it. To gauge the number of participants in the human rights movement one has to decide exactly what is meant by the word "participant." Are we to consider "participants" those people who sympathize with the ideals of the movement, but take no active part in it, or only those who are constantly standing up openly in defence of human rights with total disregard for the good of their families, or for their own safety? And if someone has signed one or two letters of protest when his close friends have been denied certain rights—can he be regarded as a participant in the human rights movement or not? What about a writer who is fighting for the freedom to write what he wants? Or a Crimean Tartar who has been struggling for years to obtain one right and one right alone—the right for his people, or simply for himself, to return to the Crimea?

There is no absolute criterion by which this problem can be solved, and therefore opinions as to the numbers of participants in the human rights movement vary: some say "there is a mere handful of us," others: "it's a vast movement."

I feel that anyone who has spoken out publicly against violations of human rights by the Soviet authorities—even just once—can be called a participant in the human rights movement. With the situation in the Soviet Union as it is, any such action is, in itself, an act of civic courage, and as a rule, anyone who has decided to take such a step will already be giving more than just passive support to the movement, he will be helping it in one way or another: perhaps by printing or hiding documents in his still "safe house," by collecting money to help the families of prisoners of conscience, or by helping to find work and wages for those who have been fired because of their active defence of human rights, and so forth. I do not think that this is too loose a criterion for assessing the numbers of participants in the human rights movement. I know a considerable number of people who have never stood up in public against violations of human rights, but who, while remaining anonymous, are doing a great deal to further the work of the movement, and who, may rightly be regarded as valuable members—for example the typists who help

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in the publishing of *A Chronicle of Current Events,* or the people smuggling human rights documents out of the country.

If we accept this interpretation of the concept of "participant in the human rights movement" then the movement cannot be considered small or restricted merely to the intelligentsia. We may rightfully include in its number, in addition to all the nationality movements, the millions of believers in the Soviet Union, who resist the oppression of an atheist government. The majority of these believers are manual workers, low-grade white-collar workers and peasants. The opposition of Catholics, Baptists, Pentecostalists, Adventists and even Orthodox Christians is taking on more and more of a human rights flavour, which is evident from their *samizdat* documents and from the birth, within these movements, of human rights organizations such as the Orthodox Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights, the Council of Relatives of the Evangelical Christian Baptist Prisoners in the USSR and the Emigration Councils of the Pentecostalists, among others.

The concept of human rights and their defence is also penetrating into the consciousness of working people in general. The workers began with underground organizations like the "Young Worker" group formed in Alma-Ata in 1967, the two underground circles in Sverdlovsk, whose members were brought to trial in 1970 and 1971, and the Union for the Defence of Workers' Rights in Kerch. The founding of the open Free Trade Union in 1977 was their first attempt at "legal" human rights activity. Despite the organizers' lack of experience, this is a very important beginning. I do not think that the immediate arrest of the trade union's organizers will prevent their followers from continuing on the same lines, and the nascent workers' movement will follow the same course taken by the other movements —the course of open struggle in defence of human rights.

The evolution of the attitude of the Jewish movement for emigration to Israel towards the human rights movement is interesting. For quite a long time Jews wishing to leave the country cut themselves off completely from dissidents of any sort, even from human rights activists. This was odd, since the participants in the human rights movement were strongly sympathetic to the "refuseniks" and spoke out in their defence, because they saw them being denied one of the basic human rights—the right to be reunited with one's family and to choose one's place of residence. But there was little contact with us from that quarter.

The majority of "refuseniks", especially those from the provinces, argued as follows: "I do not want to have anything to do with this country, the lawlessness that goes on here is none of my business. I want to leave, so I must not get on the wrong side of the authorities, after all it is they and not the dissidents who have the power to let me go."

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The authorities themselves disproved this logical premise: from 1969 onwards it became clear that it was not those who waited quietly while their visas were delayed and delayed who were let out first, but those who made a fuss about it and insisted on their right to emigrate. Obviously the authorities were more eager to rid themselves of restless citizens. And, despite the danger (you never knew whether you would be allowed to go straight to Israel, or sent to a prison camp first) many "refuseniks" decided on this plan of action, especially since the majority had only pretended to be uninterested in the affairs of the country they were leaving in the belief that it would facilitate their emigration.

It was after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act that the Jewish movement for emigration to Israel made a noticeable turn towards the human rights movement.

Nowhere in Soviet legislation is it stated that one is forbidden to leave the country, but, on the other hand, nowhere is this right guaranteed: there is simply no mention made of it. But in the Helsinki Final Act the matter of the reunification of families is given a specific paragraph and the Soviet government was obliged to examine this problem in good faith. It is one of the most precisely formulated paragraphs in the humanitarian clauses in the Final Act. And, naturally, the "refuseniks" immediately began to cite this document. The Jewish activists Vitaly Rubin and Anatoly Shcharansky were among the founder members of the Moscow Helsinki Group, and they were later joined by Vladimir Slepak and Naum Meyman. Jewish "refuseniks" take part in the work of the Lithuanian and Georgian Helsinki Groups too. Anatoly Shcharansky began his public activities as a participant in the Jewish movement, but at the time of his arrest, he was equally regarded as an activist in the human rights movement—a very significant and by no means unique example. In the past three years contacts have also been established with the German emigration movement: they have begun to turn to the Moscow Helsinki Group for assistance.

IN this way, the human rights element is a feature of all social movements in the Soviet Union which are in any way at odds with the official ideology. What makes the Soviet situation unique is that it is the powers-that-be themselves who violate the Constitution and laws, and it is the supporters of all the dissident currents who are deeply concerned that the fundamental law and the international pacts and treaties on human rights which have been signed or ratified by the Soviet Union should be observed, and who wish to bring Soviet laws into line with these agreements. It is not the actions of the dissidents which are illegal; on the contrary, it is their suppression that is illegal and contravenes the international obligations of the Soviet Union.

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Under the conditions which now exist in our country, any spark of life in an individual or in the nation as a whole is stifled because we are denied the most basic of human rights. It is not only those who take a particular interest in social problems who are painfully aware of this, but all those who have conscious spiritual needs, such as the need to express themselves in creative work, or even simply in honest toil, the need for contact with real art, those who dream of seeing distant countries, those who feel for the injured and persecuted—and many, many others. It is precisely because of this that the human rights movement has become the most representative of all groups in the Soviet Union at the present time, has attracted significant numbers of activists from all other groups, and why all social movements in the Soviet Union have ventured into the human rights field in varying degrees.

The common struggle for civil rights is leading to a growth in mutual understanding and assistance which promotes the consolidation of social groups with differing ideologies. All these groups are in contact with human rights activists—with the Moscow Helsinki Group and with *A Chronicle of Current Events,* through them establishing direct contact with one another. It has become a fairly common occurrence for the Moscow Helsinki Group and the activists of religious and nationality movements to hold joint press conferences for foreign correspondents (together with Orthodox Christians, represented by the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights, Pentecostalists, represented by their Emigration Councils, Jewish "refuseniks" etc.). Joint documents on general human rights problems and in defence of the persecuted are also becoming more common. A typical instance was the statement issued on 14 January 1977 in connection with the explosion in a Moscow underground station, which the authorities tried to pin on the dissidents. This statement was handed to foreign correspondents at a press conference organized by the Moscow and Ukrainian Helsinki Groups. In addition to members of these two Groups, it was signed by members of the Initiative Group for the Defence of Human Rights in the USSR, the Initiative Group for the Defence of Human Rights in Georgia, the Soviet Section of Amnesty International, the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes, representatives of the Jewish movement for emigration to Israel, the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights and the Pentecostalists. The statement denied that the dissidents were responsible for any explosion and set forth their general stance on terrorism, which they all viewed "with indignation and disgust."

The tendency towards consolidation has also been apparent in joint human rights statements issued by various Christian groups. The Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights, founded by Orthodox Christians, now sets itself the task of defending

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Christians of all denominations. Recently several of the Committee's documents have been signed by Baptist and Pentecostalist as well as Russian Orthodox representatives. The activities of the Moscow Helsinki Group stimulate the consolidation of widely different social currents into a single human rights movement that incorporates the demands of these various groups in its documents.

As well as the documents devoted to problems of importance to Soviet society as a whole (the plight of Soviet prisoners of conscience, psychiatric persecution of dissidents, the interception of postal and telephone communications, the right to choose one's place of residence both within the country and abroad, irrespective of one's nationality, the right to work, the right to social security of the old and the disabled, etc.) there are more than 20 Moscow Group documents dealing with the problems of different nationalities: the Ukrainians, Crimean Tartars, Jews, Lithuanians, Meskhi and the Germans; and 10 dealing with the persecution of believers: Baptists, Pentecostalists, Adventists and Catholics. There are further documents relating to the situation of workers, peasants and scientists.

The "universality" of the Moscow Helsinki Group is apparent not simply in the claims of its members, but in the Group's position in Soviet society: it has become the main spokesman for the human rights movement and a general centre of gravity for various independent social currents. The large number and variety of representations made to the Moscow Helsinki Group are indicated by the diversity of its documents. An analysis of the signatures on letters in support of arrested Group members demonstrates the wide social and geographical range of the Moscow Group's contacts. About one thousand people have signed these letters, including representatives of those different nationalities and religious denominations whose problems are reflected in the Group's documents, and people of all social classes. It is instructive to note that 73 per cent of signatories to letters in defence of Yury Orlov and Alexander Ginzburg are from the provinces. (10 years earlier, in 1968, letters written in defence of activists in the human rights movement who had been tried and convicted—including Ginzburg himself—were signed principally by Muscovites; only 30 per cent of the signatories were from the provinces.)

An indirect but, in my opinion, very convincing proof of the general recognition of the Moscow Helsinki Group is the attitude towards it taken by Soviet and East European *emigré* circles. Clannishness of nationalities and differences in philosophies that are blunted in the Soviet Union because of common vulnerability in the face of an aggressive regime, become much sharper in emigration, and divergencies in opinion sometimes become quite substantial. As a representative of the Moscow Helsinki Group, I am happy to say that I have never come across any denigration of the efforts of our

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Group, either in the *emigré* press or in my personal contacts with *emigré* circles. The Group enjoys the respect, goodwill and acceptance of members of all Soviet *emigré* groups. I think that this attitude towards the Moscow Helsinki Group can be taken as indicative of the attitude towards the human rights movement in general, since the Group reflects the movement's traditions and bases its activities on the human rights movement's experience—the experience of moral resistance.

FROM 1965 onwards, I, like all participants in the human rights movement, was often asked the question: "What do you hope to achieve? What practical results can your efforts possibly lead to in a country like the Soviet Union?"

It was usually people who were not themselves involved in the human rights movement who asked this question. As participants in it we did not ask one another, because we had no definite aim. Our essential motives were and are moral, not political: we believe in truth for truth's sake, and not for any other reason, and we believe that the dignity of man does not allow him to reconcile himself to evil, even if he is powerless to prevent it. We have never expected to see any immediate results or direct benefits from our public protests.

But it is striking that fewer and fewer doubts have been expressed about the point of our public protests as the years go by, and in recent years doubts have ceased altogether. This is because not only active participants in our movement but outside observers too have found that our "unpractical" efforts have achieved tangible results.

Above all, it appears that the "lonely and desperate" are not as few as might have seemed, and that the movement is growing despite arrests and emigration. Next, it seems that this "unpractical" movement, which is not particularly concerned with increasing its numbers, is supported by the religious and nationality movements in our country, while others, such as the "Marxist" supporters, have failed to attract them.[1]

In the last 13 years it has become clear that the authorities cannot simply do as they wish; they are dependent on the reaction of the population. It is obvious even to the casual observer that the regime is gradually being forced to resign itself to open implementation of civil rights.

[1] The most well-known of them, Roy Medvedev, calls for efforts to be concentrated on gradual reform of the Party and state system, and constantly emphasizes the pragmatism and the attainability of this goal as perhaps its most important merit. But Marxists not only are not attracting new support, but are actually losing their already small number of old supporters. The nationalist-religious current which is represented by such eminent people as Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Igor Shafarevich is visibly not dying, as the Marxist one is; it has actually been growing in the last few years. But it does not and cannot hope to draw a response from non-Russians, and that is essential because the Soviet Union is a multinational country of which Russians make up less than half the population, and nowhere, except in the most rural provincial areas is there a purely Russian population.

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The increase in dissident activity has not led to any substantial rise in the number of arrests. On the contrary: there have been fewer political trials in recent years. The pattern of convictions for political reasons over the years is as follows[2]:

| 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1978 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 66 | 111 | 123 | 64 | 66 | 67 | 86 | 40 | 38 | 40 | 28[3] |

This decreasing number of political trials cannot be explained by any liberalization in the regime; it has been brought about by an increase in the number of cases of taboo-breaking. The more often a taboo is broken the lighter the punishment and the more reluctant the authorities are to mete it out. Take Daniel and Sinyavsky, for example; they dared to publish their works abroad and received very long sentences in labour camps, but writers doing the same thing eight to 10 years later were merely expelled from the Writers' Union, and some of them did not even suffer that.[4]

SO far I have talked about efforts to liberalize the Soviet regime from within. However, these efforts can have no long-term prospects of success if one approaches the USSR as a closed system: in the world today there is no such thing as a closed system.

From the very beginning, the human rights movement has sought the support of the democratic forces of the West, and every year this appeal for support becomes more evident, taking the form of sending to the West a stream of information about violations of human rights in the USSR, and calling directly to the West for help. This is quite natural since: (1) Western societies are based on recognition of the value of those rights which Soviet citizens are seeking, and therefore our aspirations will be generally understood and will arouse sympathy in the West, and (2) in the world of today the fate of one nation is closely bound up with the fate of all, and

[2] The figures are calculated mainly on the basis of information provided in issues 1-49 of *A Chronicle of Current Events*, with the addition of data from other sources. It is of course not possible to know of every political trial, and in particular information relating to the early years—when the *Chronicle's* network of informants was much smaller—is incomplete. Cases where the defendant was sentenced to labour camp or to prison are included in the figures. As well as these, over 150 " politicals " are known to have been judged insane by the courts and sent to psychiatric hospitals for compulsory treatment during these years, but the inclusion of this data makes almost no difference to the correlation of the numbers of people convicted over the years.

| 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1978 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 81 | 125 | 146 | 92 | 91 | 81 | 106 | 50 | 47 | 43 | 30 |

The tables do not include numbers of people sentenced to exile, but such cases are few and do not alter the overall perspective.

[3] It is possible that the number of convictions for 1978 will exceed the data for the years 1975, 1976 and 1977: it is known that a further 32 people arrested during 1977 and 1978 are awaiting trial or have already been convicted, but we do not yet have any information on their trials or sentences.

[4] Unrestricted publication of literature is of course still not " permitted ": in 1974 the Leningrad writer Mikhail Heifetz was sentenced to a term in camp for his literary work.

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if one government has uncontrolled power it affects the general climate. The uncontrolled sway of the Soviet government, ruling a superpower, particularly affects the general climate, and threatens the security of all mankind.

The relations between our movement and the West are not those of poor petitioner and patron, but those of the advance guard and the main force: we both have the same interests: the participants in the human rights movement in the USSR will only be successful if they are given vigorous support from the democratic forces of the West. We have felt that support more than once, starting with the trial of Sinyavsky and Daniel. Normally it has been offered on national or corporate principles: Ukrainians, for example, have stood up for Ukrainians, writers have spoken out for persecuted writers, scientists for scientists, and so on. Information which has reached the West about violations of human rights has been disseminated along the same lines: the Jewish emigration movement's documents went to Jewish organizations, *samizdat* from the minority nationality republics was circulated among corresponding national minority *emigré* organizations, believers wrote to the World Council of Churches, to Keston College, to the religious centres of their particular denomination, and so on. However, there was practically no one to whom these documents were addressed who was prepared to take up the cause of human rights in the USSR as a whole, and not simply his own particular cause. The United Nations Organization, to whom we often addressed such documents, never gave the slightest indication of any knowledge of them.

THE Helsinki Groups' documents are addressed to the governments of the countries who signed the Final Act of the Helsinki accord. I agree with Valery Chalidze's explanation of the greater success of these representations compared with those made to the United Nations: the Final Act was signed by relatively civilized countries to whom the situation in the Soviet Union appeared intolerable because it did not conform with the standards of the co-signatories, whereas United Nations conventions had been signed by other countries, in which the situation was so bad that, in comparison, it did not appear so scandalous in the Soviet Union and, if anything, appeared better than in some of the other signatories' countries. Be that as it may, it was the appeals by Helsinki Groups which, for the first time in the history of the human rights movement in the USSR, drew a public response in the West at governmental level. It was in this sense that President Carter began a new epoch in relations between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union.

However, neither the public declarations by the American President in defence of the arrested Helsinki Group members, nor the denunciatory speeches by American and other delegates at the Belgrade

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Conference met with success. On the contrary, the number of political trials began to increase in 1977–78 in comparison with 1975–76. Out of 43 people sentenced in 1977, 17 were persecuted as believers; out of 17 others arrested and awaiting trial nine were persecuted for the same reason. At the same time the campaign against the Helsinki Groups was stepped up. So far 17 of the 45 Group members have been deprived of their freedom, and two members of the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes have also been arrested.

How is this complete disregard for the opinion of the West, this increase in repression and particularly the punishments meted out to the Helsinki Groups to be explained? There is no doubt that the government decided to step up the number of arrests because it was convinced that the activities of the Helsinki Groups were " contagious ", and chose the lesser of the two evils: loss of prestige in the West and complications in its relations with the co-signatories of the Helsinki accord rather than the alternative of a rapid growth in the human rights movement under the protection of the Helsinki accord. The authorities have been unable to deal with the activities of the Helsinki groups any other way than by making arrests. (They have not been very successful even in this: those arrested have been replaced by others. Five new people have been coopted into the Moscow Group, five into the Ukrainian, two each into the Georgian and Armenian Groups. When the arrests began, the Moscow Group had issued 19 documents; now there are 68.)

However, the harsh sentences have gone beyond what is necessary to curtail the nefarious activities of certain of the more irritating human rights campaigners. There might also be the idea, of course, of " making an example to warn others off." But I think the authorities also hope to show the West that their support is futile, and that it can even be harmful for the dissidents. The Belgrade Conference strengthened their resolve when they saw that the American delegation had little support from the majority of the European countries.

The arrests of members of the Helsinki Groups began in February 1977 and continued even through the Belgrade Conference, when five people were arrested, one at a time, each time with a glance at the reactions in Belgrade. Until the Belgrade Conference there had been only one trial, that of Mykola Rudenko and Oleska Tikhy of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. They were blatantly given the maximum sentences for " anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda ", for their part in the Helsinki Group's activities. Clearly the authorities wanted to test the reactions of the other signatories of the Helsinki accord to arrests and harsh sentences. The remaining trials took place after the Soviet delegation at Belgrade managed to get " no resolution " on the observance of the humanitarian clauses in the Final Act.

The harsh sentences passed on the members of the Moscow Group

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provoked a stormy reaction in the West, and it was encouraging to note that people of all political hues expressed their sense of outrage. (There were speeches by members of all three major parties in the British House of Commons on the subject of the sentencing of Orlov; there was a mass all-party rally in Paris after the trials of Ginzburg, Shcharansky, and Pyatkus, and numerous statements were made by American congressmen and senators of all political colours.) However, it is more difficult to remedy the situation now than it was before the trials, because repealing the sentences now would involve loss of prestige, to which the Soviet authorities are quite sensitive. It is possible that these considerations of prestige could pale in the face of a threat of even greater loss of prestige, by which I mean the possibility of moving the 1980 Olympic Games from the USSR to another country.

It is difficult to say whether the Soviet Union will be faced with this or whether the desired result would be achieved by threatening to move the Olympic Games. The same is true of an embargo or restrictions on trade, credit, scientific and cultural links with the Soviet Union. One cannot be certain in advance that any of these actions would be successful. I do not feel qualified to suggest any concrete steps or order of priority: I insist only on the necessity for public opinion and governments of the democratic countries to stand up firmly to the Soviet Union where human rights questions are concerned. It is only thanks to their unremitting moral strength that the protest of a small handful of Soviet citizens with no means of putting pressure on the regime has grown in 13 years from something scarcely audible into a movement that has changed the psychological climate in the Soviet Union, and influences the West's relations with the USSR. The West has far greater powers and opportunities than the Soviet dissidents, and it is reasonable to conclude that combined efforts should prove fruitful.

*Translated by Ann Waterson*

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# Scientists Among Soviet Dissidents

**Valentin Turchin**

THE fact that the Soviet dissidents include a disproportionately large number of scientists is one that requires some consideration and an explanation that at the very least can serve as an hypothesis. The most widespread explanation is the following. By the nature of their work, scientists have a greater need than others for freedom of thought and for creative liberty; hence scientists are quicker than others to take a stand over basic human rights. Such an explanation, however, can scarcely be considered a satisfactory one. The scientist who stands up for human rights suffers in his own work, to the point of being denied all possibility of doing it. On the other hand, if he does not "get involved in politics," the physicist or biologist is fully capable of succeeding (so far as a Soviet scientist is able to do so) in his chosen *métier*. Thus the thesis that the scientist rebels in order to improve working conditions *on his own behalf* is not a tenable one so far as the natural scientist is concerned (and when I say scientist I mean primarily the natural scientist): that is, it does not work in the way it works so far as the artist is concerned, for example. A comparison between the scientist and the artist is extremely indicative. Thanks to the unique, almost pathological conservatism of the Soviet leadership, artists in the USSR have been placed in a singular situation. Even without getting involved in politics, many or perhaps even most of them are forced to become dissidents, to hold unofficial exhibitions and so forth. They may be spoken of as being "dissidents on their own behalf." But it is not "on their own behalf" that scientists act, but "on behalf of all." So in what way are scientists different?

The above explanation can be brought more into line with reality if an "intermediate term" is inserted between the premise and the conclusion. This is that as scientists have a greater need than others for intellectual liberty, they are quicker to appreciate the deformed nature of a totalitarian regime, are more painfully aware of it, and the resultant emotions spur them into dissent. However, even in this form, the explanation is still not wholly satisfactory. As a result of my personal contacts I am convinced that the decisive factor in the formation of the dissident is his serious view of certain higher principles or, what amounts to the same thing, the drive towards some higher goal which conflicts with totalitarianism. Only the existence of a higher goal can prompt a man to sacrifice his well-being and career interests.

My own explanation for the disproportionately large numbers of

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dissident scientists is this: it is not the scientific vocation which leads scientists to combat totalitarianism, but rather a certain type of personality requiring the existence of a higher goal and a serious attitude to this goal (in other words, a religious type of personality) which causes an individual to think of becoming a scientist; and the same thing brings him into conflict with society, to the detriment of his career. Here I take religion to mean any system of supra-personal values showing an individual the way to a higher meaning of being. To a young man whose upbringing has been to all intents and purposes areligious, i.e. outside any of the traditional religions (and most of the Soviet population belong to this category), science provides the opportunity to discover a foundation and a fulcrum on which a religious experience can be based. Science provides a concept of the world as existing in a state of *creative evolution,* the kind of changing state whose results cannot be accurately predicted but have a higher meaning, even though this meaning too may not be exactly stated but only guessed at. Science, as the sum of human knowledge of the world, is part of this process; the unveiling of each mystery of nature leads us further through the wonders presented by the evolution of the created universe. By entering science and making a personal contribution to its progress, a contribution is *ipso facto* made to that awesome evolutionary process, i.e. a form of personal immortality is achieved. Thus we see here the basic elements of the religious sphere of life: a picture of the universe, a meaning for existence, communion with eternity, the veil of mystery that can be partially lifted but never revealed in its entirety. In their scientific guise, these religious elements spark off the same emotions which occur in the make-up of the traditional religions. I well recall my own emotions, when still a child, only just able to read, upon discovering in the magazine *Znanie-Sila* ["Knowledge is Power"] an article on Darwin's theory of evolution, on animal fossils. I was seized by an awed rapture and the need to act immediately, without delay, that very instant. I can only term the feeling one of religious fervour.

Like all other human characteristics, religious feeling is possessed by different people in different degrees. In no way do I wish to assert that all scientists possess the feeling at its most intense, or that all persons without a formal religious background but with a highly developed religious sense are bound to become scientists. However, it is my contention that many young people with a highly-developed religious element in their make-up have a leaning towards science and become scientists (in the case of those in the Soviet Union, at least). It is they who make up the large pool of individuals from which the dissidents emerge. For totalitarianism robs their life of meaning. Totalitarianism is a lie and brings stagnation, it is an obstacle on the great road of evolution. Totalitarianism seeks to deprive such indi-

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viduals of respect for creation and seeks to prevent them from making that personal contribution to the evolutionary process that they have prepared for and have counted on making. It comes into irreconcilable conflict with their religious feelings, not just with their career interests. In combating totalitarianism these individuals re-establish the meaning of existence for themselves.

IT is in this light that we can proceed to make a general review of the movement to resist totalitarianism in the Soviet Union. Given the cruelly repressive nature of the regime, in order to resist it is essential to have spiritual support and certain supra-personal values. At the present time in the USSR we see three distinct currents, each grounded in values of its own. The first is the nationalist movement; the second is made up of the religious movements, in the traditional sense of the term; and the third is the human rights movement, whose members call themselves simply "dissidents", but do not qualify this term with the words "national" or "religious." Obviously, not all or even most dissidents are scientists. But the fact that the dissidents include a disproportionately large number of scientists, as I have tried to explain, helps us understand that the dissident movement is in its essence also a religious phenomenon. The concept of human rights is merely the socio-political manifestation of the religious view of existence that underlies the dissident movement. It is for this reason that the term "dissident," with the religious connotation it possesses as a result of its historical origins, has taken root in modern Russia. This is also why it is thoroughly wrong of left-wingers in the West to criticize dissidents for "thinking only of the interests of the intelligentsia and not of the interests of the people." The dissidents are in no way expressing the professional interests of the intellectuals. In the USSR, *more is the pity,* there do not exist any organizations representing the interests of any social grouping. Let us hope that such bodies will one day come into being, but dissent in its present form has merely been the necessary preparation and prologue. As a religious phenomenon, the dissident movement has no direct link with the division of society into social classes. Human rights are essential to all people, irrespective of their social affiliation. The social composition of the dissident movement is another matter, and is governed by the fact that the religion confessed by the dissidents requires a good education and broad intellectual horizons.

I would like now to examine the position of science in a totalitarian society in somewhat greater detail, turning first of all to the successes of Soviet science. Soviet propaganda is so loud in its praises of the advances of science in the USSR and of the enormous numbers of engineers and scientists there that the man in the street both in the Soviet Union and in the West has gained a rather incorrect impression of the place of Soviet science in the world. Two factors have

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contributed to this: in the first place, the capacity of the Soviet system, through its centralized structure and through the irresponsibility of its leaders, to concentrate enormous resources on a few main programmes and thereby to achieve spectacular, propagandistically weighty successes (the initial phases of the space programme are a striking example); and secondly, Western scientists, in their efforts to obtain bigger research appropriations from their own governments, are inclined to stress the achievements of Soviet science and not its weaknesses, for the mass media at least. A disinterested analysis of the facts, however, will show that despite the great outlay of funds and resources and the enormous amount of manpower poured into science (as regards the latter, the USSR leads the world, in both absolute and relative figures), the successes scored by Soviet science have been somewhat less than modest.

HOW can the contribution of the USSR to world science be assessed? [1] An attempt can be made to do this by using as a criterion the number of Nobel Prizes for Science awarded to different countries. Each year, three Nobel Prizes are awarded for the most outstanding contributions to the three most important of the natural sciences: physics, chemistry, and physiology or medicine. The objective nature of these awards is recognized throughout the world; they are the highest international honour granted to a scientist, and the number of Nobel Prizes received by citizens of a given country can be considered an approximate expression of the contribution it has made to pushing forward the frontiers of science (scientific applications and technology do not count).

Let us take the list of Nobel Prizes for the 30 post-war years, 1945–74 inclusive. Every time the award was divided between two or three scientists we shall consider that each received one-half or one-third of the prize. We find that nationals of 20 countries received the prize during this period. If the total number of prizes received by the nationals of each country is calculated, the first six countries will be ranked as follows:

TABLE 1

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | USA | | $42\frac{2}{3}$ | prizes |
| 2 | Great Britain | | $18\frac{2}{3}$ | ,, |
| 3 | Germany | | $5\frac{5}{6}$ | ,, |
| 4, 5 | USSR and Sweden | each | $3\frac{1}{6}$ | ,, |
| 6 | France | | $2\frac{1}{2}$ | ,, |

We see that the contribution of the USSR is not comparable with the contribution of the two leading world scientific powers, the USA

[1] The two tables given below and the following commentary on them are taken from the present writer's own book *Inertsiya strakha* (Khronika Press, New York, 1977). The book will be published soon in English by Columbia University Press under the title *Scientist's Worldview and the Inertia of Terror.*

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and Great Britain, which together obtained more than 60 out of the 90 prizes awarded during the 30-year period.

To provide some assessment of the effectiveness of Soviet science in terms of scientific output, let us calculate for all countries the number of Nobel Prizes awarded per 10 million of the population (a typical "small country"), and we obtain Table 2.

Obviously, the placing of countries in this second table cannot be considered an accurate reflection of their scientific effectiveness in view of the large relative fluctuation where Nobel Prizes have been

TABLE 2

Relative Numbers of Nobel Prize-winners by Country

| | *Country* | *Population (in millions, for 1968)* | *Total no. of Nobel Prize awards for period 1945–74* | *No. of awards as a proportion of population (per 10 million pop.)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sweden | 7·9 | $3\frac{1}{6}$ | 4·0 |
| 2 | Great Britain | 55·3 | $18\frac{2}{3}$ | 3·4 |
| 3 | Switzerland | 6·1 | $1\frac{5}{6}$ | 3·0 |
| 4 | Norway | 3·8 | $\frac{5}{6}$ | 2·19 |
| 5 | USA | 200 | $42\frac{2}{3}$ | 2·133 |
| 6 | Finland | 4·7 | 1 | 2·128 |
| 7 | Ireland | 2·9 | $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1·55 |
| 8 | Netherlands | 12·8 | $1\frac{1}{3}$ | 1·04 |
| 9 | Germany (FRG & GDR) | 74·0 | $5\frac{5}{6}$ | 0·79 |
| 10 | Czechoslovakia | 14·4 | 1 | 0·69 |
| 11 | Australia | 12·2 | $\frac{5}{6}$ | 0·67 |
| 12 | Argentina | 23·6 | $1\frac{1}{3}$ | 0·56 |
| 13 | Portugal | 9·5 | $\frac{1}{2}$ | 0·53 |
| 14 | France | 50·3 | $2\frac{1}{2}$ | 0·50 |
| 15 | Canada | 20·8 | 1 | 0·48 |
| 16 | Austria | 7·3 | $\frac{1}{3}$ | 0·46 |
| 17 | Belgium | 9·6 | $\frac{1}{3}$ | 0·35 |
| 18 | Italy | 52·8 | $1\frac{1}{2}$ | 0·28 |
| 19 | Japan | 102·4 | $1\frac{2}{3}$ | 0·16 |
| 20 | USSR | 237·8 | $3\frac{1}{6}$ | 0·13 |

awarded only once or twice. We see that in terms of the proportion of Nobel Prizes awarded, the Soviet Union is last out of 20. It comes ahead of only those countries which had no prizes awarded to any of their citizens during the period covered. If we limit ourselves to major countries with populations greater than 40 million, the list of such countries will include China, India (together with Pakistan and Bangladesh), Brazil, Nigeria and Mexico. It can be safely stated that science in the Soviet Union is ahead of these countries.

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TOTALITARIANISM, hostile to freedom of thought and consequently to science as well, is the general cause of the difficulties which face the scientist in the USSR. If a scientist can wall himself off from society, to some extent, he can be no worse off than are his Western colleagues. It is for this reason that, for example, the situation with regard to pure mathematics is better than in other fields of science. But even the mathematician, not to mention scientists working in other fields, is involved in the life of society in the course of his work.

In the following paragraphs I shall try to specify how the totalitarian regime in the USSR has a baneful effect on science.

**1.** The policy of the Soviet Communist Party on staffing and appointments leads to a situation where executive positions are filled not by more capable scientists but by persons who are more reliable from the Party standpoint. It is scarcely necessary to say the two qualities are not only not complementary, but are in direct conflict with one another. Those who are better intellectually endowed are better able than others to appreciate the falsity and wretchedness of the regime. Even their aesthetic feelings force them to keep their distance from officialdom. The creative personality is not capable of sympathy for a regime that is grounded in the suppression of free creativity. Conversely, the totalitarian regime hates and fears the creative personality.

**2.** Philosophical and ideological speculation together with activities lying on the borderline of the experimental sciences and philosophy are subjected to close ideological control, and everything which fails to conform with "Marxist-Leninist materialist philosophy" has no chance of existence. It is common knowledge that the ideological censorship has in its time led to the persecution of geneticists and cyberneticists. The situation is not so extreme nowadays, and Party "philosophers" try not to interfere in the workings of the individual sciences. But they continue to interfere with the philosophy and methodology of science, and in this respect little has changed since Stalin's day. This has had an enormously damaging impact on Soviet scientific thought, on a scale which unfortunately has not been properly realized either by many Soviet scientists, as they are on the "inside" and do not know what those protecting them from philosophy are depriving them of, or by many Western scientists, who find it difficult to penetrate the workings of the Soviet mind. The general way in which the Marxist-Leninist philosophers try to exercise this care and protection is evident from the very fact that it was the leading scientific theories of the day which were subject to persecution: genetics, cybernetics, Bohr's interpretation of quantum mechanics, among a host of other trends in thought. The Soviet scientist of the present day has absolutely no knowledge of modern scientific philosophy. As regards the different forms of positivism, for example, he is merely told that they are all idealistic, distorted, petty

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theories showing the decadence of the capitalist social structure. The Soviet scientist is taught philosophy at the level of the mid-nineteenth century, and only what is called "materialistic" philosophy, moreover, in such a dogmatic form that all it can do is bore him to death. This same approach to philosophical method, *and it alone,* has a place in every text-book used at every level, beginning in the lowest grade at primary school and going right through to the final year at university. As a consequence, the majority of Soviet scientists lose, without realizing the fact, one of the prime sources of creative thinking; they do not acquire the habit of utilizing the intuitive abstract concepts so necessary for seeking new solutions. The very word "philosophy" is something they find off-putting. This leads to a situation where Soviet science finds it easier to tread well-worn paths than to blaze new trails. How *can* Soviet scientists win many Nobel Prizes? The most striking and original achievements of Soviet science have been mainly due to the thinkers of the older generation not yet drilled into behaving like Army privates or sieved through the fine mesh of the stagnant totalitarian regime.

**3.** The limitations on contacts with foreign countries keep Soviet scientists in isolation. In order to win the right to travel abroad, particularly to "capitalist" countries, the Party has to be shown that the scientist is trustworthy to a high degree. Correspondence and contacts with scientists visiting the Soviet Union are also subject to control. And the question of free exchange of information with foreign countries does not even arise. A large number of scientists work at secret establishments where they are obliged to report on *every* (even casual) meeting with any foreigner.

**4.** There are likewise heavy restrictions on contacts among Soviet scientists themselves. In the first place, an enormous proportion of serious scientific research, on which vasts sums of money are spent, is conducted in secrecy, with contacts in such instances being possible only through a top-heavy system of red tape and subject to innumerable limitations. In the second place, the panic displayed by the Soviet authorities over the general flow of information and ideas extends to scientific information too. The kind of situation prevailing in the West, where there is a copying machine in the institute where you work and where without asking you can run off several copies of documents that interest you (whether by paying for them or free of charge), is completely impossible in the Soviet Union. When a Soviet citizen is told that in the West this is taken for granted, at first he will be unable to believe it. He is perhaps more amazed at the possibility of there being *uncontrolled* reproduction of printed information than at anything else in the outside world.

**5.** Last but not least, there is the oblique impact of totalitarianism on the development of science that occurs as a result of an economic system stamped by the cult of bureaucracy, by irresponsible tyranny

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on the part of Party bodies, by there being no immediate feedback between manufacturer and user, by extraordinary conservatism and inflexibility in the introduction of new equipment, and other features of the same kind. The range and quality of industrial goods supplied by Soviet industry to laboratories is a constant nightmare for the Soviet scientist. As regards quantity, totalitarianism can (more or less) cope, but it has utterly failed to deal with the problem of quality. Refined technology in the USSR is a constant problem and a cause of dependence on Western nations.

The different factors enumerated above are integral to the very nature of totalitarianism and will continue to operate so long as the system of government is totalitarian in nature. Those people who are impelled by religious devotion to science or to other forms of creativity will continue to clash with the totalitarian system and this clash will go on producing new dissidents.


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# Brezhnev the Writer, I

**Victor Nekrasov**

IN its second issue for 1978 the Soviet monthly review *Novyi Mir,* which Alexander Tvardovsky used to edit and which is now run by Sergei Narovchatov, published Leonid Brezhnev's memoirs of the part he played as chief of political services for the 18th army in the operations in what has been called the "Little Land"—*Malaya Zemlya*—around Novorossiisk.

These reminiscences, running to 30 odd pages, were enthusiastically greeted by the critics and what takes the place of public opinion in the USSR. Promptly reprinted in millions of copies, they roused thousands of readers, according to the newspapers, to write letters exhorting Brezhnev to continue writing his memoirs. Although snowed under with his official obligations, Brezhnev generously acceded to these requests, and *Novyi Mir* No. 5, 1978, published a continuation entitled "Rebirth," devoted to the post-war reconstruction of Zaporozhe and Dnepropetrovsk where Leonid Brezhnev was a regional Party committee secretary at the time.

The publication of these "books" (the second in an edition no less spectacularly large) triggered off an avalanche of meetings, plenums and conferences expressly devoted to the study of the writings of comrade Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU and Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. So far, we do not know which of Brezhnev's assistants did the actual writing of these "books."

I now live far away from my country, torn from my native soil; already I am beginning to forget many things, but I am still a careful reader of *Pravda* and *Literaturnaya Gazeta.* From these papers I have learned what a great event it was over there, the emergence of a new writer, an authentic, profound writer whose works are helping his country and his people to live and build. . . .

In *Pravda* I read:

> There is not a single workers' or peasants' collective, not a single group of geological prospectors lost in the taiga, not a single trawling vessel or mountain hamlet where people are not reading, re-reading and assiduously studying L. I. Brezhnev's books *The Little Land* and *Rebirth,* inexhaustible wellsprings of thoughts and ideas.

According to the Polish paper *Trybuna Ludu* they are "an unending fount of knowledge"; for the poet Sergei Narovchatov "a priceless treasury of experience," "a communist code of morality" and "layers of memory, infinitely precious to the historian of the future, of a man formed by the communist party."

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And this is not all. The books of L. I. Brezhnev are not only fertile in profound ideas; they are also, if we are to believe the journalists who gathered for a scientific conference, "a splendid model of Party spirit and literary craft, a source of creative inspiration."

Again it is Sergei Narovchatov, as a communist and a man of letters, who points up the extraordinary wealth of Leonid Ilyich's discourse:

> It is simple but comprises a multitude of layers. From an ordinary, anodyne fact the author draws far-reaching, I would even say winged conclusions, of which only a deeply thoughtful and sensitive man is capable. Furthermore, Leonid Ilyich is a rare master of the art of the aphorism, as a result of which his discourse remains graven in the memory.

To give an example: "Even if a man has made a mistake, no one has the right to jeer at him." Or again: "One must not wound people's self-respect or their dignity." "We must all keep these words of Brezhnev's in our head", declares Sergei Narovchatov, and I am grateful to him for having put me straight, for without him I would not have been aware that they were aphorisms.

IN my exile in Paris I can only regret that I am so far away from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Dushanbe and Minsk, from the hundreds of cities, villages, geological prospecting groups and trawlermen who are discussing L. I. Brezhnev's books so fervently; that I have to content myself with reading in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* instead of hearing in the flesh comrade Berdnikov, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences and Director of the Gorky Institute of World Literature, paying homage not only to the riches of the Brezhnevian opus and its global repercussions, but also to "his engaging humanity, his intimate tone, the irresistible simplicity and naturalness of the author's dialogue with his readers, qualities," adds comrade Berdnikov, "that claim the attention of all those who, like us, devote themselves to the art of the word."

Having read "The Little Land" (but not "Rebirth"—a pleasure still to come*), I must thank L. I. Brezhnev for, among other things, having enlightened me on something I had not noticed about the war, although I fought in it for three years. It would appear that the war was won by the political authorities who were always two steps ahead of us. And there I was making the mistake of believing that they were a good five kilometres behind us! I am ashamed, really I am!

Now, therefore, in expiation of my sin and when there is next a joint plenary session of all the creative Unions at which they will present L. I. Brezhnev with a membership card for the Writers' Union

* Two more instalments of Brezhnev's autobiography, *Vozrozhdenie* ("Rebirth") and *Tselina* ("The Virgin Lands"), have been published since [Ed.].

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(full—not honorary!) I shall propose, either in writing or by telegram that the "Little Land" should be rebaptized by the USSR Supreme Soviet the "Big Land" (I was about to say the "Continent"), that a Brezhnev Prize for Literature be instituted, and that L. I. Brezhnev himself should be the first recipient, while he still has the chance to have himself published by Soviet publishing houses and not later, after his fall or his death, when it would be American publishers, as in Khrushchev's case. . . .†

To all those who in envy or indignation, sorrowfully or contemptuously criticize L. I. Brezhnev's *opera* I would say this: beyond all question, Leonid Ilyich "has raised up an everlasting monument," to quote Pushkin. Not only to himself but to the whole epoch of socialist realism of the last quarter of the twentieth century. Call this literary genre whatever you like—stereotyped repetition, triumph of the conventional, gutterpress literature, barefaced braggadocio or a tissue of lies; say that the hullaballoo surrounding these writings amounts to a revival of the personality cult in the absence of a personality—none of it will do any good; they are well and truly a monument to the most dismal, the greyest, most desperately barren period in Russia's history.

† [Ed.] In fact President Brezhnev has gone one better than Khrushchev. Victor Nekrasov reading his *Pravda* could not have failed to notice subsequently the ecstatic headline on page 1 of the issue for Sunday 26 November 1978. Taking pride of place over the paper's other front-page news from abroad is the happy announcement: "*Malaya Zemlya* Goes To Press In Oxford". "In Oxford, the headquarters of one of the greatest publishing houses in the West specializing in scientific and socio-political literature for the English-speaking countries," we read with bated breath, "L. I. Brezhnev's book *Malaya Zemlya* is almost ready for publication." Has the Soviet President achieved the ultimate in intellectual recognition in the 500th year of the history of the Oxford University Press? Closer scrutiny reveals that the presses about to roll are those of the Pergamon Press. According to *Pravda*, its director, Robert Maxwell, "concluded that the books of L. I. Brezhnev are so valuable because they help us understand why in the eyes of the world the Soviet leader is the man sincerely attached to *détente*, to the cause of preventing the nuclear war which would be catastrophic for humanity."

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# Brezhnev the Writer, II

**Efim Etkind**

"The grey ones begin—and win the chess game."
Georgy Vladimov

IN his lifetime he has been elevated to a demigod. He is at the helm of the world's most powerful state. All conceivable power rests in his trembling aged hands: state power, Party power, ideological, military and juridical power. The highest medals decorate his chest. He holds the highest ranks and titles: he is General Secretary and Marshal and Supreme Commander-in-Chief and Chairman of the Presidium and Hero of Socialist Labour . . . and. . . . His ceremonial portraits can be seen in all institutions. The people tell jokes about him—is not that the height of fame? And yet he is envious. He desperately envies those whom he both despises and fears, those who lack his titles and his power, those who are in charge of nothing and scare nobody. Who would have thought that, having expelled from their country Solzhenitsyn and Brodsky, Sinyavsky and Galich, he would envy them? Is it possible that he is not satisfied with being an all-powerful dictator, but craves the laurels of a writer as well?

HIS sinister predecessor was roughly the same age when, having cast aside the affairs of state, he became a self-styled linguist and shook the scholarly world. Two small and not altogether grammatically correct articles on the need to inculcate Marxism into linguistics (that is the verb Stalin used: inculcate) were received with wild raptures of a kind that were never likely to have been bestowed on any author in the world; for the Pharaohs—who would indeed have been feted in this way—never got themselves into print. It is time one recalled the phantasmagoria of the Stalinist revolution in science; today it seems nothing but a bad nightmare. What on earth could have made the earnest elderly scholars and scientists of that day talk such utter rubbish? Had the whole country gone completely mad? I have before me *Questions of Syntax in Contemporary Russian* published in 1950, an exclusive textbook on main clauses and premises, categories of syntax, set phrases, connective links, impersonal clauses, infinitive clauses. . . The authors of the articles, trying to outdo one another, keep repeating with manic doggedness conclusions which are bereft of all meaning:

> . . . in the light of I. V. Stalin's works on linguistics . . . (p. 3).
> Comrade Stalin's inspired works on linguistics, providing as they do new guidelines above all to those engaged in the field of philology, are also of exceptional significance for all writings in the field of logic. . .
> . . . in the light of Comrade Stalin's directives . . .

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> According to Comrade Stalin's directives . . . (p. 5).
>
> . . . Soviet linguistics and Soviet syntax, in a stage of quests and searchings, have had fresh vistas opened to them by the works of Comrade Stalin . . . (p. 14).
>
> Comrade Stalin's inspired works on linguistics have given Soviet linguistic science enormous possibilities of creative development (p. 127).
>
> As directed by Comrade Stalin in his fundamental works . . . (p. 327).
>
> As noted by I. V. Stalin, the process of development must be understood not as a movement in a circle but as a forward movement . . . (p. 327).

Page after page after page . . . Academician V. V. Vinogradov, Professor P. S. Popov, University Lecturer V. P. Sukhotin, University Lecturer N.S. Pospelov: experts on linguistics, experts on Russian syntax. And all of them talking rubbish. Are they out of their minds? Or are they mocking the senile leader? This genius of all time actually tells us that the process of development is a forward movement! He has discovered that "grammar gives the rules for the composition of sentences" and is "the outcome of drawn-out abstraction of human thought"! And famous Academician V. V. Vinogradov exclaims awestruck: "I. V. Stalin teaches us that thanks to grammar a language is able to wrap human thought in linguistic garments" (p. 36). Well! What profundity! Who would have guessed it without Stalin's help! No, no: the Academician is indulging in mockery, in parody, in Aesopian language.* Alas, no: it is no parody. This is how scholars wrote in 1950. And not at the point of a gun but voluntarily. How shameful!

But this happened almost 30 years ago, in the years of the Cult of Personality when "some citizens had suffered illegal repressions. . . ."

Comforting words! The Cult; isolated violations of socialist legality; repressions suffered by some citizens; posthumous rehabilitation. If one translates this into straightforward language it means something quite different. . . .

Yet all this happened so long ago. Why rake up old wounds, why rub salt in them? Now everything is changed. After all, there's no more Cult, no more Personality.

THE other one crowned himself with a scholar's laurels. This one has become a craftsman of words. And it has all come back again: the sycophantic raptures, outdoing one another in unrestrained acclaim.

". . . the Soviet people's enormous interest in Comrade L. I. Brezhnev's recollections which are of such invaluable importance in the further

* Aesopian language: i.e. allegorical language used to conceal anti-regime sentiments (Ed.).

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education of the workers . . ." (editorial in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 1 May 1978).

" The Soviet people and all progressive mankind have received with enormous interest L. I. Brezhnev's memoirs *The Little Land*. In his second book *Rebirth* . . . Leonid Ilyich tells of the first post-war years . . . " writes *Literaturnaya Gazeta* a week earlier, on 26 April. All progressive mankind? " On 24 April in Moscow at a gathering of the capital's intelligentsia, everyone's speeches stressed the enormous mobilizing force of these two books and noted Leonid Ilyich's supremely vital reference to the primary need of strengthening Party organization in order to raise the levels of all Party work."

All the paper says further on seems just a worsening of the delirium which the reader can safely omit. But did it really say, earlier on, " reference . . . to the need . . . of strengthening . . . in order to raise. . ." ? Can this really be said in all seriousness? But how about this: " To approach education in an all-embracing manner, to judge its effectiveness by the results: this is what Comrade Brezhnev's works teach us." (How else can you educate if not in all-embracing manner? And how else can you judge if not by results?) " The books give all Communists, all of Moscow's workers and the workers throughout the country a fresh burst of creative energy, promote improvements in the completion of tasks aimed at turning the capital into a model Communist city." I do not know who wrote this. The report in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* is signed TASS. All I know is that its author is in perfect command of the various mind-clogging terms that recall the official jargon of 1950 with its eulogies of Comrade Stalin's " inspired works." Is it the same writer who wrote the same stuff then . . . or are they all cast in the same mould?

" Listening to Leonid Brezhnev's speech, I thought about his two books which are right now being widely read and debated in our country—books which eloquently describe the stages of our long, hard, glorious road. . . ." Thus wrote Belorussian prose-writer Maxim Tank in the paper of 1 May. A Hero of Socialist Labour, he was a 1978 Lenin Prize-winner for a book of poems, *The Pine Trees of Narochansk*, which no one had heard of.

The hyperboles grow and grow; the phantasmagoria again assumes the shape of a nightmare. " I thought about his books. . . ." Books! Both works mentioned by Maxim Tank, i.e. *The Little Land* and *Rebirth*, are slim autobiographical sketches which even taken together hardly go to make up a pamphlet. " His books which so eloquently . . ." Eloquently? Let's look at this eloquence:

> There is rarely agreement between builders and designers; but Kuzmin and Dymshits always managed to find a common language; I don't remember any conflicts between them. The Party Provincial Committee exerted a constant influence on their relations. From the first, both agreed with me on the daily schedule for a day-by-day programme and as a check-up on deadlines that had to be met.

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Eloquence indeed . . . " found a common language " . . . " the daily schedule " . . . " deadlines " . . . What a brilliant pen, what unrepeatable style! Who else could have found comparable words to describe the relationship between the Director of the Zaporozhstal Works and the Manager of the Zaporozhstroi Trust?

The author talks about the reconstruction of factories and agriculture in Zaporozhe where in 1946 he had been " elected " (at the recommendation of the Central Committee!) First Secretary of the Provincial Committee. People had made titanic efforts to rebuild the economy destroyed by the Germans—there is no doubt about that, and Brezhnev knows this better than most: he was in charge of the reconstruction of several regions in the Ukraine. But in his memoirs he sounds like a chief of staff writing about a battle—writing from an elevated position which takes no account of the dead down below, hears no groans, sees no boots wading through mud. At the H.Q. all is calm and serene. The commanders discuss the campaign plans and at night they drink their brandy. In Brezhnev's writings there are no workers, no peasants—only directors and Party secretaries. If a girl worker should make an appearance, then only because the boss noticed her and chucked her under the chin:

> The girls worked well. During the 30th Anniversary of the October Revolution celebrations I saw them among the procession and shouted into the microphone: " Greetings to the Brigade of Anna Loshkareva! " They looked up and smiled.

A few more shadows—fitters, drivers—flit across the pages, but the small people cannot be seen from up on high. " The girls worked well ": that's all there is to say about " the lasses who brought up the concrete for the dykes and dams." But then, you cannot expect a general to mention the ordinary soldiers in his memoirs. Still, one must stress the unique anti-democratic strain of the Brezhnev sketches. In the years 1946–47 there is no food, what there is, is rationed; there are long queues at shops and exorbitant prices asked at so-called " commercial shops." In the villages they live on bread and kvass (except that there is no bread or kvass). The concentration camps are on the increase, full of prisoners of war who recently returned—or were returned—from Europe, various " traitors to the Motherland " and the intelligentsia: for in August 1946 the ideological pogrom began with Zhdanov's speech on the journals *Zvezda* and *Leningrad* and the Central Committee's decree which put an end to the cooperation that had existed between the intelligentsia and the Soviet regime during the war. 1946–47: the black years of post-war disillusionment and disappointment, the re-emergence of the *Oprichnina,* obscurantism in the sciences and the arts.

LEONID BREZHNEV noticed nothing of this. He was occupied with one thing: the restoration of the economy, an objective which must merit admiration; but it is also strange. Perhaps he was totally

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indifferent to the people's food shortages, to the writers' problems? Reading Brezhnev's memoirs, one tends to say: well, after all, in those years he had nothing to do with Stalin's or Zhdanov's crimes: he had a job to do—rebuilding the factories. But it is in order that the reader *should* make this deduction that Leonid Brezhnev took up writing. His memoirs say nothing about the life the people led, about politics in the widest sense of the word, about the fate of culture and literature or, in fact, about ideology. Not a word about any of that. He stands aside, gets down to real problems while others either jabber or spill ink and blood. . . . He sees affairs and people only in terms of the problem he is tackling. Zhdanov is mentioned in his writings. But in what context?

> It was impossible to work without a light in the evenings—yet it was equally impossible to obtain electric bulbs in the province. I decided to write to the Party Committee, to Comrade Zhdanov. I explained the situation and asked for 3,000 bulbs to be sent. We got them after three days.

So there's Comrade Zhdanov for you—businesslike, efficient, attentive and responsive to the people's needs. The fact that he is at the same time indulging in massacres of writers, composers and theatres is omitted: after all, the author is interested only in the reconstruction of Zaphorozhe. Stalin, too, is mentioned in Brezhnev's writings—but how?

> Stalin rang me at night and we had a serious talk. What we had managed to achieve, what until quite recently could be regarded as a success, had turned almost into a defeat. Circumstances had changed—not in our province but in the country and in the world. Our time-limits had to be speeded up.

That was Stalin, the zealous master, the demanding leader. The fact that Stalin was at the same time preparing to drag the country and the whole world into a new war, that he was exterminating his intelligentsia and dooming whole nations to deportation, that millions of citizens were languishing in camps was beside the point: the author's sole interest lies in the reconstruction of Zaporozhe. He is an economist. His field of vision is limited; he is a pragmatic thinker, a technocrat. The author's image emerges from the memoirs clearly enough: L. I. Brezhnev, Secretary of the Provincial Party Committee, businesslike, energetic, a man of action and initiative within the framework of the jobs he has been asked to do; he lacks independence of judgment and evaluation; he is respectable and ordinary. Nothing singles him out—except the special powers he has been given by the Central Committee. He thinks like everybody else, talks like everybody else, writes like everybody else. The French might have called this story-teller *Monsieur Tout le Monde*. His characterless writings can be compared only with the deadly characterlessness of his newspaper *Pravda*.

Here are a few extracts from his memoirs:

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On 16 March 1947 the USSR Council of Ministers issued a decree on new deadlines; this was followed by another on speeding up the installation of equipment; and on 8 April the Party Central Committee adopted a resolution on the work of the Party committee on the building site. Three times in one month the highest Party and State organs turned their attention to our affairs.

On relations with the staff:

In Dnepropetrovsk my relations with Ilya Ivanovich Korobov—director of the province's largest metallurgical works named after Petrovsky—did not get off to a good start. He was the representative of a famous dynasty: his father had been chief foreman in Makeyevka, his brothers blast-furnace operators, and, I believe, his sons as well. Now the grandson carries on the tradition. Stalin knew of the family, just as the whole country knew of them. It wouldn't have mattered, except that, to put it mildly, the man was sometimes arrogant, lost all sense of reality, as it were.

And another:

One must not think that a surfeit of critical remarks shows that things are in a bad way. On the contrary: the more open, the more vocal, the criticisms, the better things are going. The workers of Dnepropetrovsk successfully completed the fourth five-year plan for the restoration and development of the national economy. Areas under crops in our province surpassed the pre-war ones. . . . The wounds inflicted on Dnepropetrovsk by the fiercest of wars have been healed.

More on criticism:

It has been my lot to endure many reprimands in my lifetime and, however hard it has been at times, I always tried to glean a grain of sense from them, to draw the necessary conclusions—which in the end benefited both me and the cause. However, criticism from above is generally accepted one way or another; whereas criticism from below is a far more complicated matter.

(Poor author: now he is no longer criticized from above because there is no one above him; and from below no one dares to criticize him. How does the poor fellow manage without it?)

Scenery:

I knew pre-war Zaporozhe well . . . I remembered its shady squares, its attractive open places where fountains played, the beautiful residential houses which were the pride of the people of Zaporozhe; I remembered their rest-centres on the island of Khortitsa and the wide green belt of Lenin Prospekt which stretched right through the town to the River Dnepr.

Digressions on foreign policy:

The "cold war" began. It lasted many years—two decades, in fact. This was not the first nor, alas, the last instance when the capitalist powers—exploiting our difficulties—tried to dictate to us, to interfere in our internal affairs. . . .

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Sometimes all this seems a clever parody, the witty creation by a clever writer of a bureaucrat who, having had his fill over the years of the columns of *Pravda* and *Kommunist*, can only talk in clichés such as "speeding up the installation of equipment," "relations did not get off to a good start," "the famous working dynasty," "lost all sense of reality," "surfeit of criticisms," "successful completion," "wounds were healed," "glean a grain of sense," "benefiting the cause," "criticism from below," "our internal affairs" . . . No, of course it would be odd to expect a prominent statesman to reveal the sparkle of polished writing, to contrive a few stylistic surprises; or display an artistry with words. No, it is not that. What interests one is the man, the personality. But there is none: no man who could see a town through his very own eyes, different from anyone else's. There is no one there to re-live joys and sorrows or even lose his temper, choke with fury. There is nothing like that. Occasionally he might get angry. In real life he might even swear. But in his memoirs it comes out like this:

> At one of the plenary sessions of the Provincial Committee I had occasion to criticize the Secretary of the Novovasilyevsk Regional Party Committee . . . I said then that the Secretary of the Regional Committee was above all a prominent political worker, representing as he did the Central Committee of our Party in a large administrative region. Yet the speeches of some of our Secretaries were more like reports by economic planners—there was no political line discernible in them. It was the same with the Novovasilyevsk Secretary: he spoke well about tractors and bulls—but needed help when it got to Party work. That is not good enough!

This is the style of socialist realism. Khrushchev, having had too much to drink, shouted about the bourgeoisie: "We'll show them . . . ." But in the paper next day it said: "We'll show them the advantages of the socialist system." Brezhnev supplants any manifestation of human emotion with a pseudo-courteous "That is not good enough!" As long as there is no sign of anything human. . . . Nowadays there can be no talk of a "Cult of Personality"—seeing that the latter is missing altogether. . . .

Brezhnev's memoirs, like any work of literature, have their own aesthetics: the aesthetics of the rubber stamp, which is to say, the aesthetics of "greyness," i.e. dullness. There must be no association of words that is not already familiar to a reader of *Pravda* from his infancy. There must be no unfamiliar epithet. To go back to the Anna Loshkareva episode: what sort of voices have the girls got? Pure, bell-like . . . What sort of childhood did they have? A hungry one, full of wartime deprivations. . . . What is their life like now? Joyous. How do they work together? Splendidly. What kind of calls do we need for action? Concrete ones. . . .

Through this slag-heap of clichés not one vivid human word can get through, no fresh intonation is allowed to penetrate. Platitude upon

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platitude, slag-heap upon slag-heap forming an impenetrable wall, with not one blade of grass peeping through.

Rubber stamp aesthetics are closely linked with the idea of an impersonal society. All writers must use the same trite turns of phrase, because they are all the same: there must be nobody who is different. If someone talks differently or maintains he sees things differently, then he is a *poseur* and as such should be flogged, if not with whips then with words, to teach him not to be so eccentric. We can't have these clever-clever boys!

Guess where these quotes come from:

> 1. . . . the builders were invited to an open Party meeting. They talked of new tasks to be accomplished, of the tremendous scope of the work that had to be done . . . civil engineering networks, refineries, cattle-breeding farms, boiler rooms, living quarters. . . .
>
> 2. From the very first days, apart from the organizational work, much attention had to be devoted to Party-political work. These matters were virtually solved simultaneously. The one problem was that in contrast to already established, settled collectives ours was in a constant state of flux. Housing, services, our whole way of life had to be resolved.
>
> 3. The Party organization at a building site is constantly concerned with questions of economic planning. These questions are examined and debated in the collective of the various teams. The improvement of our indices was enormously helped by the fact that our 6,000 workers and employees were studying concrete aspects of economic planning applicable to building sites.

You might think all these come from one and the same pen, are uttered by one and the same cartoon bureaucrat. No—there are three different authors. The first excerpt comes from A. Itigin's "Prize-winning Workers" (*Zvezda*, No. 11, 1977, p. 162); the second is from Leonid Brezhnev's *Rebirth*; the third comes from a speech at the 22nd Party congress by M. Nazarov (*The 22nd Communist Party Congress and Questions of Ideological Work*, 1962, p. 247). It is easier to imagine one author than a bunch of triplets . . . But the most astounding thing of all is that in this crowd of faceless, platitudinous, grey men the most faceless, the most platitudinous and greyest of all is the man who heads the state and the Party. Does that not mean he is in the right place?

GREYNESS is an aesthetic principle that is all-embracing. Grey style of this kind means that its authors are no longer distinguishable and can be confused with one another. Such is one of the profound laws of Soviet literature; those who do not accept it become instantly suspicious. However, the same principle may be observed beyond and above all aesthetics. Thus, the thoughts arising in the head of a Soviet citizen of the Brezhnev epoch must of necessity be grey—that is to say, commonplace, trivial, unable to amaze one by their bizarreness or brilliance or, God forbid, by their depth. Brezhnev's memoirs are

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didactic: now and again aphorisms or maxims appear which, one presumes, will shortly be produced in a special anthology like Tolstoy's *Wise Men's Thoughts for Every Day.* Perhaps one could advise the State Political Publishing House to bring out Brezhnev's Little Red Book on the lines of Mao Tse-tung's Quotes. Here are some of the innumerable homilies produced by the Soviet leader:

> There are no secondary affairs in the work of the First Secretary.
>
> Looking back, remembering what has been achieved, we cull from this experience what will be useful for today and helpful for the future.
>
> Knowing one's job—that is the touchstone of a man's value.
>
> A Party leader must accept his work colleagues for what they are.
>
> The principle of one-man management is useful so long as the one-man manager is prepared to accept criticism.
>
> If a man knows his job, is devoted to it and wants the common weal, then he must have every support.
>
> To guard a leader against criticism is to destroy him.
>
> He who no longer accepts criticism is lost to the job.
>
> Criticism is not like chocolate; it is not supposed to be enjoyed.

There are many such homilies in Brezhnev's memoirs—and they are all on the same level of statesmanlike wisdom. Flaubert once concocted a Dictionary of Truisms. A beard would be defined as "a sign of manliness"; money—"the root of all evil." About work: "it's always to the fore"; "women should not talk about their work"; the most important thing in life"; "it's everything." Now we can add to it Brezhnev's "touchstone of a man's value." Or how about "If a man knows his job, is devoted to it . . . then he must have every support." Almost as good as Flaubert, surely?

Demonstrating the same depth and originality of thought in his speech of 25 April at the *Komsomol* congress, Brezhnev told his young listeners:

> It is time for workers on the ideological front to put an end to the still current practice of mechanically reiterating platitudes and meaningless chatter. It is time to make it a rule to use simple, intelligible, easily understood language when talking to others; and in your writings make each word come to life with genuine thought and feeling. This is particularly vital in such an important area of communist construction as the education of the new generation.

It is edifying to see how this expert in truisms fights against truisms, how this master of the rubber stamp and verbal slag-heap demands that genuine thought and feeling be infused into the written word.

Physician, heal thyself!

BREZHNEV'S memoirs depict many peculiarities of Soviet life. It is just a question of detecting them. For instance, the author's conversation with a secretary of a Regional Party Committee:

"What's the matter with you (but using the familiar "*ty*," like the

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French "*tu*"), Alexander Savvich? Tell me straight, what's up with you (thee)?"

"Everything's all right here . . . Did you (polite form, "*vy*," like the French "*vous*") listen to the radio this morning?"

An unequal relationship: the Secretary of the Regional Committee addresses the Secretary of the Provincial Committee per "*vous*" while the Secretary of the Provincial Committee addresses the other per "*tu*." That is talking down, as is done in the Soviet army. Age does not come into it: the one who is younger in rank may be twice his superior's age —yet he will still be addressed per "*tu*." This seems to be a remnant of the serfdom days . . . Is Brezhnev aware that his feudal roots are showing here, that the boorishness of long ago still persists?

Or how about this? A subordinate is so used to having no opinions of his own that whenever he is unfairly reprimanded "from above" for something which only yesterday elicited nothing but praise, he accepts it as normal. What is more, he then joins the angry management in attacks upon himself and wallows in self-criticisms. He never even dreams of speaking up for what had seemed right yesterday. He instantly bows to the demands of the new day—"for my opinion is that of my superior."

Or this: Brezhnev knows well that he—and the whole of the Soviet leadership—are accused of anti-semitism. He does not refute the charge: for to do so would be to acknowledge its existence. Soviet leaders like to indulge in a kind of shadow-play: what is not named by them does not exist. The term "anti-semitism" is used only with regard to Americans or Nazis. There is no such thing as foreign press or radio: they may be ignored. We do not want to know if some do read, or listen to them. But the experienced Soviet reader does realize that Brezhnev wants to deny the charge of anti-semitism when he writes:

> For their bold decisions Mikhail Nikolaevich Chudan and Aisik Volfovich Shegal received State Prizes.

Or,

> Many workers, engineers, production heads and Party workers received the Order of Lenin. Among them—I. A. Rumyantsev, M. N. Chudan, A. V. Shegal, M. I. Neduzhko, V. E. Dymshits, A. N. Kuzmin. My name too was on the list.

(Just imagine—sharing the same list with Jews!)

And Germans too are being honoured, if tacitly so: "Franz Josifovich Makles and Gordei Antipovich Pankratenko cast the first steel. . . ."

At the same time the Germans were freezing in Siberia after having been expelled from their Volga Republic. But then, we are not talking about that!

Another interesting trait of the memoirs is the central "I"—the constantly reappearing first person singular. It is not just the author's

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"I," but the "I" of the Master who, it is true, has behind him another Master with an even bigger letter "I."

> . . . We shared out the duties between the Secretaries of the Provincial Party Committee. The ones that fell to my lot were the general administration of the province, agriculture, propaganda and agitation, supervising the work of the province's plan and of the province's *Komsomol*; administering the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Office of Public Prosecutions, matters dealing with the cadres. In all this what mattered most were people: what mattered most was to understand them and be understood by them.

One wonders after all this what "fell to the lot" of the other secretaries? There is still the Provincial Executive Committee, i.e. the Soviet power: but this is not mentioned. The author of the memoirs does not say "I was the sole, absolute dictator on whom depended the economy, the police, the courts, the young—and all the posts in all the institutions." He is accustomed to using veiled formulations and terminology—so much so that he is unaware of the comic element in his sentence "We shared out the duties between the secretaries": I took the whole lot, the others did not count.

And once the First Secretary possesses such fullness of power from the top downwards, and commands slavish submission from down upwards, then his obsession with the first person singular sounds perfectly natural:

> I said at one of the meetings . . .
> I spoke at the end of the meeting . . .
> I deemed it necessary to add . . .
> I was never in favour of crude, blatant or "tough" methods of leadership

(i.e. I am better than Khrushchev, the embodiment of toughness.)

> I insisted on increased editions for the Province's newspapers . . .
> I congratulated the builders . . .
> I did not lose touch with the rest of the country . . .
> I said in conclusion . . .
> I told the Provincial Committee Bureau . . .
> I draw my personal conclusions . . .

MORE than anything else, Brezhnev's memoirs show Soviet society the way a party leader and head of state sees it or would like to see it. Of course, the memoirs also describe the reconstruction of the Ukraine's industrial areas destroyed by the war; this reconstruction of the economy contains its own pathetic element. However, the careful reader will see here too everything we have tried to say: the aesthetics of greyness and rubber-stamping, the desire for the commonplace, for bureaucratic levelling out; the serf-like habit of implicit submission to the management and the despotic treatment handed out to the underlings; the Master's self-intoxication with power, accompanied by the customary meaningless references to "criticism from below" and "self-

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criticism"; the cunningly veiled Aesopian language, allowing the well-trained reader to pick up some ideas not expressly put in so many words.

Brezhnev's memoirs are an attempt at self-justification on the part of the author in the eyes of his contemporaries and of posterity. However, this self-justification turns itself instead into a deadly charge against him and his "society of equals"—no, not equals, far from it: but a society of sameness, of enforced equalization which is the objective of the present Soviet leadership. Brezhnev's style is the terrible embodiment of this evil sameness and greyness—to which, happily, our intelligentsia has never submitted and will never submit.


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# Marx and Engels as Sociobiologists

**Lewis S. Feuer**

"IN Berlin, in the windows of socialist propaganda book-shops the works of Charles Darwin occupy the place of honour beside those of Karl Marx." Thus wrote the eminent Italian criminologist and future socialist, Enrico Ferri, in 1894.[1] European socialists in general before the First World War regarded Marx as a Darwinian, and his theory of historical materialism as a corollary of the Darwinian evolutionary method. Marx and Engels were taken as adherents of what today is called "sociobiology," except that at the end of the nineteenth century the expression that was used was "biological sociology."[2] It was known that in his youth Marx had been attracted to Hegelian philosophy but that was long before *The Origin of Species* was published. Indeed, Wilhelm Liebknecht, the German socialist leader whose authority was second only to that of the resourceful August Bebel, narrated vividly the reception of Darwin's thought in Marx's London household. Liebknecht, who until 1862 visited Marx almost every day, told how "when Darwin drew the consequences of his investigations and presented them to the public, we spoke for months of nothing else but Darwin and the revolutionizing power of his scientific conquests." There were "radical enemies" of Marx, Liebknecht observed indignantly, who "have spread the idea that Marx, from a certain jealousy, acknowledged the merit of Darwin very reluctantly and in a very limited degree," but, Liebknecht retorted, "Even before 1859 . . . Marx had recognized the epochal importance of Darwin, who, far from the noise and stir of the great cities, in his peaceful country home, was preparing a revolution similar to the one Marx himself was preparing at the turbulent centre of the world."[3] Though there is no evidence whatever that Marx knew of Darwin's work before 1859, Liebknecht's first-hand account indicates how the Darwinian mode of thought swept through the socialist circles of the time.

All of this bears on the whole contemporary discussion concerning the place of "alienation" in Marx's thought, and the efforts made in recent years to "re-Hegelize" Marxism, and to restore the "young Marx." For this discussion has ignored the most basic fact of Marx's later thought—that Marx, under the influence of Charles Darwin's *The*

[1] Enrico Ferri, *Socialism and Modern Science* (*Darwin—Spencer—Marx*), 2nd ed., tr. Robert Rives La Monte (New York, 1904), p. 89.

[2] Jean Demoor, Jean Massart, Emile Vandervelde, *Evolution by Atrophy in Biology and Sociology*, tr. Mrs. Chalmers Mitchell (New York, 1899), p. vi.

[3] Wilhelm Liebknecht, *Karl Marx: Biographical Memoirs*, tr. Ernest Untermann (Chicago, 1901), pp. 91–92.

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*Origin of Species* scrapped, after 1860, almost all his residual Hegelian metaphysic and vocabulary, and identified what was left of the "dialectic" method with Darwin's evolutionary model, as exemplified in the social sciences. The transition was a difficult one for both Marx and Engels, for Darwin's ideas evoked in them all sorts of resistance; they were disturbed by Darwin's use of the Malthusian scheme on a world-biological scale, and troubled that Malthus, "Parson" Malthus no less, the "bourgeois" economist whom they most detested, had guided Darwin towards the discovery of the greatest scientific truth. Marx searched eagerly for a theory of evolution which would be more in keeping with the various tenets of his materialist conception of history, and for a while indeed he was attracted to a racialist alternative. Engels kept looking till the end of his life for some way to displace the Darwinian theory. Yet in 1867 and 1873 Marx's prefaces to *Das Kapital* made it plain that he had become a socialist evolutionist of the Darwinian school, making all the changes in theory and method required of a socialist Darwinian.[4] The word "alienation" could now repose in his pre-1859 notebooks, for the Darwinian wave carried Marx along as it did all of Western European radical and liberal thought. The class struggle came to be regarded as the form which the struggle for existence took in class societies; the materialistic conception of history was derived as a limiting case of the biological struggle as it obtained for the conditions of the human species; there was no room here for metaphors of man's overcoming his "alienation" from himself, his products, or the natural world.

In 1859, in the same year in which Darwin published *The Origin of Species,* Karl Marx also published a book *Zur Kritik der Politischen Oekonomie* (Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy). A dullish essay, devoid of factual empirical propositions, and largely ignored, it became famous, however, because of its vivid *Vorwort* (preface) in which Marx gave an autobiographical account of the route which had taken him from Hegelian philosophy to the materialist conception of history; its aphorisms such as "existence determines consciousness" became axioms.[5] Towards the end of 1860 Marx read *The Origin of Species.* The measure of his intellectual transition from a Hegelian materialism to a socialist Darwinism can be seen if we contrast the preface of his 1859 book with those of *Das Kapital* in 1867 and 1873.

The 1873 preface is most notable for its biological terminology. Thus it uses the word "organism" three times ("*das soziale Organismen,*" "*jener Organismen,*" "*Organismus*"), whereas the word never occurs in the preface of 1859, the word *Entwickelung* (development), together with its derivatives, does occur in all the prefaces, six times in 1859,

[4] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy,* tr. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (Chicago, 1906), pp. 11–26.

[5] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* trs. N. I. Stone (Chicago, 1904), pp. 9–15.

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and 11 times in 1873. What is significant, however, is that the connotation of *Entwickelung* has changed from that of a Hegelian sense of development in 1859 into a Darwinian mode of evolution in 1873. In other words, the language and method of Marx have become "biologized." This Marx accomplished chiefly by quoting approvingly and at length from an article on his book that had appeared in May 1872 in the St. Petersburg journal *The European Messenger*, "dealing exclusively with the method of *Das Kapital.*" Marx declared that the biological evolutionary interpretation that it gave to his work was indeed a "striking" and "generous" depiction of his dialectic method:

> While the writer pictures what he takes to be actually my method, in this striking and (as far as concerns my application of it) generous way, what else is he picturing but the dialectic method?

Marx's "generous," unknown reviewer linked the laws of economics to those of biology: "economic life offers us a phenomenon analogous to the history of evolution in other branches of biology. The old economists misunderstood the nature of economic laws when they likened them to the laws of physics and chemistry." According to Marx's conception, the reviewer declared, "social organisms" evolve in stages, each of which has its own different laws, even as plants and animals have in the evolution of species. Marx's method therefore was one which "treats the social movement as a process of natural history," a process, moreover, "governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness, and intelligence, but rather, on the contrary, determining that will, consciousness, and intelligence. . . ." Thus the model for Marx's analysis became that of a biological, evolutionary determinism, in which Marx's aim was "the disclosing of the special laws that regulate the origin, existence, development, and death of a given social organism and its replacement by another and higher one" [6]

Though the fullest statement of his biological evolutionary method was given in 1873, the first post-Darwinian preface of 1867 had in Marx's own words, already given such an allegiance. "My standpoint," wrote Marx, was that "from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history. . . ." [7] The tendency to variation is found throughout nature among social organisms as well as the biological ones. Hence Marx writes: "The present society is no solid crystal, but an organism capable of change, and is constantly changing." [8] And the word "*Organismus*" makes its appearance in the first preface to attach its biological connotation to "*Entwickelung*," used eight times, but now with the overtone of

[6] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, ed. Friedrich Engels, tr. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (Chicago, 1906), pp. 21–24.
[7] Ibid. p. 15.
[8] Ibid. p. 16.

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Darwinian evolution rather than of Hegelian development. The dialectic" method has been transformed into the method of "natural history."

AS Marx became converted to the Darwinian evolutionary standpoint he also became friendlier to the notion that the evolution to socialism would take place in a gradualist, cumulative way. Darwin's theory provided the model according to which the evolution of a species was initiated by chance variations in its members; similarly Marx envisaged that within the capitalist system, there would appear socialistic variations; then, as in the biological world, where those variations that were more effective for struggle were reinforced while competitors were eliminated, so likewise those socialistic formations that proved more efficient and more productive than their capitalistic rivals would tend to spread and prevail. Thus in 1865, under the influence of the Darwinian model as well as his experience with British workers, Marx wrote several pages on the British cooperatives which, having begun as a simple social variation, were now presumably gradually superseding the capitalist enterprises in the struggle for superior social productivity. The pages found their way into the third volume of *Das Kapital*:

> The cooperative factories of the labourers themselves represent within the old form the first beginnings of the new. . . . They show the way in which a new mode of production may naturally grow out of an old one, when the development of the material forces of production and of the corresponding forms of social production has reached a certain stage.[9]

Marx was confident that the cooperatives would prove themselves more efficient than their capitalist rivals, and triumph in open competition. The public accounts of the cooperative factories, according to Marx, proved that their rate of profit was "higher than the average profit. . . ." [10] The cooperatives provided "the proof," Marx argued, that the individual capitalist has become "superfluous as a functionary in production. . . ." [11] The cooperatives of course still required managers, but since they were now appointed and paid by the labourers, they "ceased to represent capital against them." [12] Engels added a footnote to tell of the case of a manufacturer, who having suffered bankruptcy in the crisis of 1868, was then hired by the labourers' cooperative as their manager.

What Marx called "the political economy of the working class" was held to have developed as a variant in the midst of the bourgeois economy itself. Thus, the enactment of the Ten Hours' Bill signified in

[9] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. III, ed. Friedrich Engels, tr. Ernest Untermann (Chicago, 1909), p. 521.
[10] Ibid. pp. 456–57.
[11] Ibid. p. 455.
[12] Ibid. p. 456.

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his words "a great practical success" in which "for the first time" the "blind rule of supply and demand laws" was giving way to "social production controlled by social foresight." Marx added in his Inaugural Address to the International Working Men's Association in 1864 his tribute to "the great social experiments" of the cooperative movement which were proving "by deed, instead of argument" that the working men themselves, without the direction of a class of masters, could carry on "production on a large scale, and in accord with the behests of modern science"; thereby they had shown that the system of "hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear. . . ." [13] It was the first time that Marx had ever used the language of "social experiments." Every such "social experiment" was a variant, in accordance with the Darwinian model; thus Marx departed from the scheme of total contradictions and systemic collapse of the Hegelian dialectic.

The cumulative, gradualist model never became an exclusive one for Marx. It was too much at odds with his many years' pursuit of revolution, with his choice of the revolutionary's vocation when he was a young Hegelian student. The catastrophist model, with its revolutionary panorama, associated in his mind with Hegelian dialectic, still reverberated in the brief apocalyptic passage in *Das Kapital:*

> This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralization of capital. . . . The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production . . . Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. The integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property is sounded. The expropriators are expropriated.[14]

Nonetheless, Marx's evolving Darwinian standpoint had undermined the primary Hegelian tenets of his materialist conception of history of 1859. "No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed," Marx wrote in 1859. But this statement simply made no sense in the Darwinian model. Its biological equivalent would have been the assertion that no species evolves into another unless it has previously developed into its highest possible specialized direction. This contravenes, however, the Darwinian notion of random variations in a given species, which if cumulated in a specific direction through natural selection, eventuate in the formation of a novel species. One could not say that all the variations possible to a given species had occurred; indeed, it was likely that only a fraction of those possible were realized. This was unlike the dialectical model according to which a system developed to its fullest extent, and then, beset with heightened "contradictions," made

[13] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I (Moscow, 1955), p. 383.
[14] Marx, *Capital*, pp. 836–37.

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a catastrophic total leap to its negation. In the Darwinian model, there is no catastrophic substitution or replacement of one system by another. Whereas the Hegelian model envisaged a whole system negated into its contrary, the Darwinian model does not operate with "the system as a whole"; it simply cumulates those random traits in the surviving species population that have given its possessors a differential advantage in the struggle for existence. Moreover, an evolution of a species toward a high degree of specialization, far from being the prelude for a "negation" towards a higher form, may be the setting for its extinction.

In short, the kind of Hegelian theodicy which was still intrinsic to Marx's standpoint in 1859 tended to dissolve in the Darwinian era.[15] Marx, for instance, also wrote that year:

> [Mankind] always takes up only such problems as it can solve, since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation.[16]

An historical optimism pervaded Marx's thought at this time so that he could write like a socio-historical, materialistic, Leibnizian Dr Pangloss. Central, on the other hand, to the Darwinian conception of history was the awesome phenomenon of the species, tribes, races, and peoples which have vanished because problems arose which, given their material conditions and powers, were insoluble. Hegelians, whether of the left or right, could not abide the notion that the Historical Process, or the Absolute, could generate problems for mankind that it would be unable to solve, baffling the Absolute Consciousness or the Species Essence that was supposed to be historically realizing itself. Darwin, on the contrary, never ceased to be aware how people had vanished in the struggle for existence. As a young naturalist on H.M.S. *Beagle* he had seen how savage tribes in Patagonia and the Pacific fought for their marginal survival, and as an old man in 1881, he wrote sadly:

> Looking at the world at no very distant date, what an endless number of lower races will have been eliminated by the higher civilized races throughout the world.[17]

If natural selection brought triumph to the more civilized peoples, then those eliminated were indeed those who had failed to meet the epoch's minimum requirements.

Marx wished to translate an historical optimism into materialist terms, but how could he as an evolutionary materialist maintain that

[15] *Masaryk on Marx*, tr. Erazim V. Kohak (Lewisburg, 1972), p. 61.

[16] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, tr. N. I. Stone (Chicago, 1904), pp. 12–13.

[17] Francis Darwin, ed., *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, Vol. I (New York, 1896), p. 286.

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whatever the problem mankind took up, the material conditions for its solution would be at hand?

Not only did the Darwinian theory provide Marx with a structural model for a theory of social evolution, but its substantative proposition, that technology was the key variable in explaining social structure and history, was also perceived to be a corollary derived from the biological nature of man. When a critic of Marx suggested that perhaps in the Middle Ages religious interests had been more important than economic ones, and that political interests had been paramount over the economic ones in ancient Athens and Rome, Marx's simple reply was "that the middle ages could not live on Catholicism, nor the ancient world on politics. On the contrary, it is the mode in which they gained a livelihood that explains why here politics, and there Catholicism, played the chief part." [18] Technology was the primary social variable because it defined the way men would get their food and shelter, and survive.

> Technology discloses man's mode of dealing with Nature, the process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation of his social relations, and of the mental conceptions that flow from them.

As Marx noted, "Darwin has interested us in the history of Nature's Technology," in the "organs" that "serve as instruments of production for sustaining life." He proposed to extend that enquiry into "the history of the productive organs of man," that is, his technology; its primacy in human history was a special case of its primacy in natural history.[19] Engels likewise reiterated both in Marx's lifetime and afterwards that the explanatory primacy of economic conditions rested on biological fact: "History was for the first time placed on its real basis; the palpable but previously totally overlooked fact that men must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, and therefore must work, before they can fight for domination, pursue politics, religion, philosophy, etc.—this palpable fact at last came into its historical right.[20] And at Marx's funeral, Engels, summing up the contribution of his friend, in his speech drew the analogy between Darwin's discovery of "the law of development of organic nature" and Marx's discovery of "the law of development of human history" through "the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development . . . form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal con-

[18] Marx, *Capital*, p. 94.

[19] Ibid. p. 406.

[20] Friedrich Engels, "Karl Marx" (1878), in *Reminiscences of Marx and Engels*, (Moscow, n.d.), p. 25.

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ceptions, art, and even the ideas of religion, of the people concerned have been evolved. . . . " [21]

Marx curiously enough was able to detach himself from his own ideological commitment, and distinguish between that part of his work which was scientific and that part which was " subjective," " tendentious," and which arose out of his party ideology. He identified the scientific part with that which was consonant with Darwin's evolutionary method. Marx's unique exercise in scientific self-judgment, usually omitted in " official " Marxist collections, took place in 1867 directly after the publication of *Das Kapital* when Marx was urging Engels to write reviews of his book for various journals. He asked Engels to contribute one to the liberal newspaper, the Stuttgart *Beobachter*: its editor, Mayer, was a friend of the noted biologist, Karl Vogt, against whom Marx had written the bitterest polemical book of his life, *Herr Vogt,* to exculpate himself from charges that he was a blackmailer and police spy. Evidently Marx wanted to prove his own scientific conscience by having published in this liberal journal a scientifically self-critical review. He directed Engels to write:

> As far as concerns the book itself, one must distinguish between the positive developments (" genuine " would be the proper additional adjective) that the author provides, and the tendentious conclusions that he draws. The first, in which the factual economic relations are dealt with quite originally and according to a materialistic (" Mayer " likes this catchword because of Vogt) method, are a straightforward enrichment of science, for example: the development of money. Secondly, how cooperation, division of labour, the machine-system and the corresponding social combinations and relations unfold themselves in a natural way.
>
> One must draw a distinction, however, with respect to the author's bias. When he demonstrates that contemporary society, from the economic point of view, is pregnant with a new higher form, he is merely depicting within the social field the same gradual revolutionizing process that Darwin has proven in the natural-historical. The liberal doctrine of " progress " contains this notion (this is pure Mayer), and it is his service that he indeed proves that a concealed progress is taking place through the modern economic relations even when they are accompanied by frightful immediate consequences. The author has likewise through his critical comprehension finished off (perhaps *malgré lui,*) all doctrinaire socialism, that is, all Utopianism.
>
> On the other hand, perhaps because of his party position, past ties and obligations, the author's subjective bias, expressed in the way in which he projects for himself on others the final outcome of the contemporary movement, has almost nothing to do with the actual development. If space permitted it, then it could perhaps

[21] Friedrich Engels, " Karl Marx's Funeral " (1883), ibid. pp. 348–49.

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be shown that his " objective " development refutes his subjective " vagaries." [22]

Marx justified publishing this judiciously scientific estimate of *Das Kapital* as tactical trickery against the scientific liberals: " With respect to the Swabian sheet," he wrote to Engels, " it would be an amusing coup to swindle Vogt's friend, the Swabiamayer. The matter can be simply arranged thus. . . . " [23] Engels did indeed write the review exactly to Marx's specifications, and it was duly published.[24] But in the guise of a swindle, Marx was indeed enjoying the pleasure of making a scientific criticism of his own work. Who better than Marx would have been aware how at crucial points in his argument he projected his " subjective " wish-fulfilments as the terminal goals of objective social development? It was as if Darwin had ventured to project as the outcome of natural selection the emergence of a zoological Superman. It was not Vogt whom Marx was swindling; he was swindling himself because he was aware that he tried to bedeck ideology as science. In any case, Marx did differentiate between the scientific, Darwinian, aspect of *Capital* and that which was ideological, political, projective.

WHEN Marx's allegedly " radical enemies " charged that he had been " very reluctant " to acknowledge Darwin's achievements, they spoke with a measure of truth. For although Marx evolved into a socialist Darwinian, he did so with all sorts of misgivings, dissatisfactions and resistances. He was led into diatribes against Darwin's empiricism and to denunciations of its Malthusian background and bourgeois social basis. Marx alarmed Engels by trying to find a higher authority than Darwin in the person of a French adventurer, Trémaux; Marx besides was worried that such liberal socialistic Darwinians as Friedrich Albert Lange would win the intellectual support of the German workers. Towards the end of his life, Marx, enjoying the friendship of Britain's young and later greatest zoologist, Edwin Ray Lankester, the friend of Darwin and Huxley, meditated on the degeneration of races and peoples in the workings of evolution. Let us trace these stages in Marx's Darwinian evolutionism.

[22] Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, " Marx to Engels, 7 Dec., 1867," *Werke*, Vol. 31 (Berlin, 1965), pp. 403–4.

[23] Ibid. p. 403.

[24] Friedrich Engels, " Review of the first volume of *Das Kapital* for the *Beobachter*," in Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 16 (Berlin, 1964), pp. 226–28. The review is excluded in the volume published by the American Communists, *Engels on Capital*, ed. Leonard E. Mins (New York, 1937), and in the similar subsequent Soviet collection, F. Engels, *On Marx's Capital* (Moscow, n.d.). Leopold Sedar Senghor in his essay *African Socialism*, tr. Mercer Cook (New York, 1959), pp. 21–22, quoted several sentences from the review whose significance he grasped; in the book by Maximilien Rubel and Margaret Manale, *Marx Without Myth* (Oxford, 1965), p. 230, the authors describe Marx's intent in this review as " ironic." There is nothing ironic about the review, however, it was a salutary occasion for self-understanding, a scientific holiday from the ideological role into which Marx had cast himself. Also cf. Maximilien Rubel, *Karl Marx: Essai de Biographie Intellectuelle* (Paris, 1957), pp. 435–36.

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It was Engels who first called Marx's attention to the importance of Darwin's newly published *The Origin of Species.*

Less than three weeks after the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species,* Engels wrote to Marx on 11 or 12 December 1859 that "that Darwin, whom it happens I am now reading, is altogether famous. The teleology that was up to now from one standpoint not finished off is now finally done with. Such a magnificent study, showing the historical development in nature, has thus far not been achieved, or at least so successfully. The clumsy (*plümpe*) English method one must take naturally into the bargain." [25] A year later, on 19 December 1860, Marx, nearly overwhelmed by personal problems, reported to Engels that during his "time of trial" those past four weeks, he had been reading all sorts of things, among others "Darwin's book on natural selection. Although it is developed in the crude English style, this is the book which contains the basis in natural history for our view." By contrast, Marx added, Bastian's book, *Man in History,* with its "psychological presentation" of history was "bad, confused, formless," contributing only here and there "a couple of ethnographic oddities." [26] More precisely, as Marx the next month wrote to Ferdinand Lassalle, Darwin's view provided the foundation for Marx's own theory that all history hitherto has been one of class struggles: "Darwin's book is very important and serves me as a basis in natural science for the class struggle in history. One has to put up with the crude English development, of course. Despite all deficiencies, not only is the death-blow dealt here for the first time to 'teleology' in the natural sciences but their rational meaning is empirically explained." [27]

There was something pathetic in the sight of two German left-wing Hegelians preening each other with the residual superiority of their method over the "crude English one." [28] A few years earlier Marx had been involved in an angry brawl with several English working men in a "pub" as he vociferously asserted the superiority of the German to the English culture.[29]

Like a typical anti-empirical Hegelian he adjudged as "crude" and "empirical" Darwin's careful amassing and culling of evidence, gathered as it was from every continent, from botanical collectors, cattle breeders, missionary naturalists, and his own observations and

[25] Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 29 (Berlin, 1963), p. 524.

[26] Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 30 (Berlin, 1964), p. 131.

[27] Marx and Engels, *Correspondence 1846–1895*, p. 125. Lassalle informed Marx that "Darwin's book escaped me," and asked him for its title. *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Lassalle und Marx*, ed. Gustav Mayer, Vol. 3 (1922; reprinted, Osnabrück, 1967), p. 350.

[28] Schopenhauer, although an evolutionist in various ways, also responded with an *a priori* metaphysician's dislike to Darwin's *The Origin of Species.* It was "downright empiricism," he wrote on 1 March 1860. Wilhelm Bölsche, *Haeckel: His Life and Work* (Philadelphia, 1906), p. 132. Frederick Copleston, *Arthur Schopenhauer: Philosopher of Pessimism* (Andover, 1947), p. 193.

[29] Wilhelm Liebknecht, *Karl Marx: Biographical Memoirs*, pp. 146–50.

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experiments; Darwin weighed alternatives, and was scrupulously fair in stating rival hypotheses.[30] What would Marx have preferred? If Darwin had followed the Marxist outline, he would have begun by analysing the presumably dialectical "contradiction" in the concept of a "species," and then, seeing in every species a struggle both among its members and with nature, elaborated on the qualitative leap in species that comes in the course of quantitative additions. Perhaps 20 pages or so of an aprioristic discussion of the concept of evolution and an insistence that every species had its own biological laws would have been included, together with a denunciation of those since Aristotle whose minds had been rendered "static" by class systems. What this Hegelian superposition would have added to Darwin's scientific content is dubious; it would have destroyed the logical rigour and factual straightforwardness of his work.

But it was Darwin's adaptation of Malthus's law of the tendency to overpopulation that was especially disquieting to Marx. As a young man, Marx had charged the Malthusians with trying to deprive the workers of their last joy in life—their sexual pleasures.[31] As a middle-aged man, he assailed Malthus's theory of overpopulation by arguing that what Malthus the "parson" called "overpopulation" was, in reality, an unemployment founded on the specific workings of the bourgeois order—a relative surplus population, not an absolute one. Marx's polemic blundered. He sarcastically complimented the "parson" on the mistaken ground that Malthus had taken a "monastic vow of celibacy."[32] Especially galling, however, to both Marx and Engels was the fact that the Malthusian theory, the distilled essence of the English "bourgeois" mind, had provided the stimulus to the greatest generalization in the history of biology. Malthus's theory, from their standpoint, was the product of an ideological "false consciousness." Yet from this presumably tainted source had issued a tremendous advancement of science. Marx had been wont to mock at the bourgeois origin of nineteenth-century theories in order to discredit them, but his customary sarcasm fell flat when he was confronted with Darwin's linkage with Malthus. He was aware as he looked over his small band of admirers, a small group of craftsmen and journalists, that not a single eminent man of science in Europe had found any heuristic direction in his own writings. In 1862, Marx cavilled privately to Engels concerning the Darwin-Malthus association, noting that Darwin's

[30] John Stuart Mill conveyed his opinion to Darwin that the latter's "reasoning throughout is in the most exact accordance with the strict principles of logic," and that the "method of investigation" he had followed was "the only one proper to such a subject." Francis Darwin, ed., *More Letters of Charles Darwin*, Vol. I (London, 1903), p. 189.

[31] Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, tr. Martin Milligan (Moscow, n.d.), p. 118 ff. Engels too wrote that "The Malthusian theory is but the economic expression of the religious dogma concerning the contradiction of spirit and nature and the resulting corruption of both." Ibid. p. 203.

[32] Marx, *Capital*, p. 676. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Victorian Minds* (New York, 1968), p. 67.

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theory was a projection upon the biological world of bourgeois competitive relations:

> Darwin, whom I have looked up again, amuses me when he says that he is applying the "Malthusian" theory *also* to plants and animals, as if with Mr Malthus the whole point were not that he does *not* apply the theory to plants and animals but only to human beings—and with a geometrical progression—as opposed to plants and animals. It is remarkable how Darwin recognizes among beasts and plants his English society with its division of labour, competition, opening up of new markets, "inventions," and the Malthusian "struggle for existence." It is Hobbes's *bellum omnium contra omnes,* and one is reminded of Hegel's *Phenomenology,* where civil society is described as a "spiritual animal kingdom," while in Darwin the animal kingdom figures as civil society. . . ." [33]

Marx therefore searched for a theory of biological evolution which would be more in accord with his philosophical and political preferences. In 1866, there occurred the bizarre intellectual episode when Marx became an enthusiast for a book by Pierre Trémaux entitled *Origine et Transformation de l'Homme et des autres Êtres.* The book enunciated a theory which Marx categorically declared was "in a historical and practical application more important and richer than Darwin's." [34] Who was Trémaux? An architect by profession, Pierre Trémaux was one of those Europeans drawn in the mid-nineteenth century to the African continent by the mysteries of the Nile River and the unexplored hinterland. After journeying in Algeria and Tunis, Trémaux became captain of a French ship bound for Egypt. Then in Cairo, in January 1848, evidently oblivious of the revolution erupting in his own country, he heard that the Pasha, Mehemet Ali, was sending an expedition to the Sudan to introduce mechanical processes for washing the allegedly auriferous sands. Despite the objections of his countrymen, Trémaux, dominated as he wrote, by "the powerful attraction of the new, the unknown," that "had taken such sway over me," joined the expedition, whose motley members consisted of several Egyptians, some Negroes, a Yemenite doctor of Polish origin, a few Turks, and a Russian officer. Soon the adventurers were quarrelling among themselves; Trémaux complaining that they did not understand his scientific interests, went wandering alone among Negro tribes, fascinating them with his chemical matches, and recording, through interpreters, the stories he heard from their prisoners and slaves. The soldiers in his expedition were too afraid to follow him into the jungle and mountains, so he went on with one follower, studying the fauna, flora, geology, and mineralogy, and noting too how the Turks enslaved

[33] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Correspondence,* tr. I. Lasker, 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1965), p. 128.

[34] Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe,* Vol. 3, ed. D. Rjazanov (Berlin, 1930; reprinted, Frankfurt/Main, 1970), pp. 354–56.

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the Negroes, and used them to exterminate each other. According to the chairman at a session of the French Society of Geography in December 1849, Trémaux determined the dividing line between the waters which flowed towards the Blue and the White rivers. He set forth his findings in a summary report on the Sudan, the course of the Nile, and the unknown lands inhabited by Negro tribes.[35] Then in later years the book which evoked Marx's approbation was written.

Trémaux's theory seemed to Marx to out-Darwin Darwin; for the French speculator maintained that the differences among races and peoples were founded on corresponding differences in the soils from which they made their living. His theory thus seemed the biological analogue to the technological proposition in Marx's materialistic conception of history; corresponding to the causal role of the mode of production in Marx's theory, there was the causal status in Trémaux's theory of the soil, the physical basis of livelihood, in determining racial or national character. To every soil profile there would be a corresponding racial profile. The direct causal influence of the physical environment on the organism seemed to fit better with Marx's technological causalism than Darwin's recourse to random, unexplained variations, to Darwin's opening to chance and probability. Significantly too, Marx found a certain validation for his various ethnic prejudices and dislikes in Trémaux's theorizing. Marx stated it all in his letter to Engels on 7 August 1866:

> The formation of the soil differentiates by contrast (not exclusively, but as the principal factor). Progress which, from Darwin's standpoint, is purely accidental, is here necessary, but on the basis of the periods of evolution of the terrestrial body: degeneration, which Darwin cannot explain, is here simply accounted for; likewise, the very rapid extinction of the simple transitional forms compared to the slow evolution of the genetic type, so that the lacunae in paleontology which are inconvenient for Darwin are here necessary.
>
> . . . For certain questions as nationality, etc., he [Trémaux] finds a simple natural basis. . . . He affirms that because of the geological formation which prevails in Russia, the Slav is Tartarizing and Mongolizing himself, proving likewise (he was long in Africa) that the common Negro type is only a degenerate form of a much higher one.[36]

Rarely did Engels remonstrate with Marx; that was one of those occasions. He warned his friend that Trémaux's theory was "without

[35] Pierre Trémaux, *Notice sur un Voyage au Soudan oriental, sur le cours du Nil et dans Des contrées inconnues habitées par les nègres Bertha du Dar-Fôq et du Dar-Gouroum. (Extrait du Bulletin de la Société de Geographie).* (Paris, 1850), pp. 2, 3, 4, 12, 26.

[36] Marx, Engels, *Historich-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Briefwechsel, Vol. 3, p. 344, Trémaux's views are discussed in Solomon F. Bloom, *The World of Nations: A Study of National Implications in the Work of Karl Marx* (New York, 1941), pp. 15–18. Neither this work nor a Soviet account cite Marx's statement concerning the

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value, because he understands nothing of geology and is incompetent in ordinary literary-historical criticism." Trémaux, said Engels, was a gullible man, who accepted " the stories of the Nigger Santa Maria and the transformation of whites into Negroes that would make one laugh till sick," and who believed that " the traditions of the Senegalese Negroes are absolutely trustworthy because these people don't know how to write." Engels could not take seriously a theory that proposed to derive the linguistic divergences of Basques, Frenchmen, Bretons, and Alsatians from diverse geological situations. This man would have a hard time explaining, Engels wrote, why " we Rhinelanders . . . haven't long since become either idiots or Niggers." Perhaps Trémaux in his second volume, mocked Engels, would " demonstrate or maintain that we really are niggers." Trémaux's hypotheses, said Engels, " flatly contradict all the facts." [37]

Nettled by Engels's total rejection of his historical materialist biology, Marx rebuked his friend the next day, 3 October 1866, that he was repeating " almost for word " Cuvier's arguments against those German naturalists who upheld the notion of the variability of species, and that Cuvier, a great geologist though he was, had nonetheless been wrong.[38] Marx argued that Trémaux's theory had the merit of opening the study into the effects of chemical agricultural methods in biologically transforming the soil, and thus, the consequences of different modes of production generally. Thereupon Engels proceeded two days later to mollify his friend, acknowledging that Trémaux deserved credit for pressing his hypothesis, although he still argued that Darwin had previously recognized some such influence of the soil. He conceded that he had not read all of Trémaux's book when he had written to Marx; nonetheless he still found the proofs adduced by Trémaux ridiculous, which was why he had lost confidence in the author. He repudiated the idea that his objections had anything in common with those of Cuvier to the idea of evolution; the issue was rather one simply of Trémaux's utter ignorance and misuse of the geological facts. Marx let the whole matter drop, evidently deciding discreetly that he had backed the wrong horse; his original attraction to Trémaux's theory probably stemmed from his longstanding inclination to a theory of racialist selection.[39]

" degenerate " Negro type. Cf. V. L. Komarov, " Marx and Engels on Biology," in N. I. Bukharin et al., *Marxism and Modern Thought*, tr. Ralph Fox (New York, 1935), pp. 194–95.

[37] Ibid. p. 360.

[38] Ibid. p. 361. Marx also wrote to his friend Kugelmann on 9 Oct. 1866 commending Trémaux's book; while granting it was " diffusely written, full of geological blunders, and greatly deficient in literary-historical criticism, it is still—for all that and all—an advance on Darwin," he said. Karl Marx, *Letters to Dr. Kugelmann* (New York, 1934), p. 41.

[39] Marx wrote in 1853 that " Society is undergoing a silent revolution, which it must be submitted to. . . The classes and the races, too weak to master the new conditions of life, must give way." Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Britain* (Moscow, 1853), p. 375.

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The notion, however, of outflanking Darwin with a theory of biological evolution often more congenial to his social views remained alive in Marx. In 1868, he became enthusiastic again over another scientific writer, Karl Nikolaus Fraas, an historical botanist, whom he characterized as "a Darwinist before Darwin."[40] Fraas's book, *Climate and the Vegetable World throughout the Age, a History of Both* (1847) had proved in Marx's view that as the climate had changed in historic times so also "even the species" as well had arisen "in historic times." Moreover, Fraas's work seemed agreeably for Marx to lead toward the conclusion that only a planned socialist agriculture could prevent the deterioration of the soil that was the outcome of class systems of cultivation:

> The first effects of cultivation are useful, later devastating owing to deforestation, etc. . . . The whole conclusion is that cultivation when it progresses in a primitive way and is not *consciously controlled* (as a bourgeois of course he does not arrive at this) leaves deserts behind it, Persia, Mesopotamia, etc. Greece. Here again another socialist tendency![41]

It remained hard for Marx to dissociate science from ideology. Alfred Russel Wallace, the co-discoverer of the theory of natural selection, and an Owenite communist, later became known as the foremost scientific advocate of the nationalization of the land; the arguments for this economic reform had no bearing on the evidence that validated the theory of natural selection, but Marxist ideology, "totalistic" in its outlook was averse to acknowledging such independences.

APART, however, from the structural similarity of Marx's "natural historical" method to Darwin's idea of evolution, Marx, partially under Darwin's influence, evolved himself into so much of a "crude" English empiricist that he felt he had to apologize for it to an old German comrade. His pre-Darwinian writings of 1858 and 1859 had been not only aprioristic in argument but characterized by the propensity to invest facts with mythological aura, to depict knowledge congealed in machinery as "alien" to the worker; the "bourgeois economists" were regarded, in Fichtean manner, as stripping the world of "alienation", and "positing" property. Such Hegelian-Fichtean language conveyed a sense of a mythic, hostile force lurking in the bourgeois machinery, and Marx's aim seems to be to exorcise such evil genii as the Christians once destroyed idols, the reified mythic entities. And this mythopoeic theme has been cherished in Marxist poetry ever since Ernst Toller in *Die Maschinenstürmer* (The Machine Wreckers) through his Lord Byron's address depicted the

[40] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Correspondence 1846–1895*, tr. Dona Torr (New York, 1935), p. 237. Fraas used classical Greek and Latin sources as the basis for his theories. Cf. C. Fraas, *Synopsis Plantarum Floras Classicae* (2nd ed., Berlin, 1870).

[41] Loc. cit.

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steam-engine as a "Juggernaut, a Moloch, a hydraheaded infernal monster, destined to depersonalize and to destroy human beings." [42]

But in *Das Kapital*, with a post-Darwinian standard for rigour established, Marx controlled his tendency to mythopoeize the machine, to call forth the demon lurking within its bolts and belts, with its energy transmuted into something hostile and alien. Instead, the emphasis shifted to hundreds of pages on the lives of working men. Whole sections of statistical and descriptive material culled from the English Blue Books, and from the reports of bourgeois inspectors, filled his pages, as Darwin filled those of *The Origin of Species*, with the reports of botanical collectors and animal breeders.[43] Marx, turned Baconian empiricist, however, assured an old German comrade in America that facts were secondary and tactical: "You will understand beforehand that all this only serves as an 'argumentum ad hominem'." [44] But readers forgot the Hegelian metaphors, and remembered the empirical facts. Engels tactfully told Marx that maybe the Hegelian prelude was a mistake, that he should have got down to the empirical-historical facts: those Hegelian pages, as he put it, showed the signs of Marx's carbuncles, though to mollify Marx who did not take to criticism, he quickly added, "for, after all, the philistine is not accustomed to this sort of abstract thought, and will certainly not bother himself with it for the sake of the form of value. At most, the points here established dialectically might be demonstrated historically at rather greater length, the test to be made from history, so to speak."[45] Yet even such a reader as Bertrand Russell, a philosopher of abstract mathematics, found the dialectics of value unconvincing, but remembered the stirring portraiture of the working men's misery.[46] At any rate, the natural-historical empiricist in Marx had emerged dominant in *Das Kapital*. Thus it continued till the end of his life. It is noteworthy that the last published work in Marx's life was a questionnaire for a social survey of the conditions of French workers. Designed explicitly to help achieve reforms that the advent of Republican France made possible, it frankly dismissed the dialectical divergences among the rival socialist schools as irrelevant to the task of social reform.[47] The "crude" English empiricist method of the social survey, which emerged much under Darwinian influences, provided Marx's final essay in social methodology.[48]

[42] William Anthony Williband, *Ernst Toller and his Ideology* (Iowa City, 1945), p. 60.

[43] The career of the Factories Inspector to whom Marx rendered a warm tribute, Leonard Horner, also business man, geologist, and Warden of the University of London, is described in Bernice Martin, "Leonard Horner: A Portrait of an Inspector of Factories," *International Review of Social History*, Vol. XIV (1969), pp. 442–43.

[44] Marx and Engels, *Correspondence 1846–1895*, p. 219.

[45] Marx and Engels, *Correspondence 1846–1895*, p. 220.

[46] Bertrand Russell, *Proposed Road to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism and Syndicalism* (New York, 1919), pp. 18–19.

[47] Karl Marx, "A Worker's Inquiry," *The New International*, Vol. IV (December, 1938), pp. 379–81.

[48] T. S. and M. B. Simey, *Charles Booth: Social Scientist* (London, 1960), pp. 37, 66, pp. 247–50.

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APART from all questions of sociology, history, and scientific method, Marx and Engels were worried, from the mid-sixties, by the growing vogue of Darwinism among the German working class. Indeed, in the person of such a thinker as Friedrich Albert Lange, it seemed possible that a Darwinian standpoint rather than a Marxist one would come to prevail among the German workers. Lange, much admired among them for his high character, intellect and learning, impressed the young August Bebel, the ablest of the working men's leaders, as "one of the most lovable men I have ever met," who "conquered all hearts at the first meeting," and remarkable for his "strong character, not influenced by threats"; Lange, "when he openly sided with the workers" had become "one of the outcasts" in his city. Bebel himself, when he went to prison in 1873, promptly proceeded to read such works as Darwin's *The Origin of Species.*[49] Though Marx and Engels were now acquiescent to the Darwinian theory of natural selection, especially its anti-teleology and evolutionary outlook, they nonetheless argued, though only privately, that the Darwinian model was no guide to socialist policy, that indeed the Darwinian model, though applicable to bourgeois society, was transcended by socialism. Thus, Engels wrote to Lange directly that his reading of Darwin had persuaded him "that nothing discredits modern bourgeois development so much as the fact that it has not yet got beyond the economic forms of the animal world. To us, so-called 'economic laws' are not eternal laws of nature but historical laws which arise and disappear. . . ." [50] Marx ridiculed Lange's Darwinian standpoint as utterly useless to an understanding of the logic of the social sciences. To his friend Kugelmann, he wrote in 1870:

> Herr Lange, you see, has made a great discovery. The whole of history can be brought under a single natural law. This natural law is the *phrase* (in this application Darwin's phrase becomes nothing but a phrase) "the struggle for life," and the content of this phrase is the Malthusian law of population or, rather, overpopulation. So instead of analyzing the struggle for life as represented historically in varying and definite forms of society, all that has to be done is to translate every concrete struggle into the phrase "struggle for life," and the phrase itself into the Malthusian population fantasy. One must admit that this is a very impressive method—for swaggering sham scientific, bombastic ignorance and intellectual laziness.[51]

From the logical standpoint, however, Engels stood on very insecure ground. For if the struggle for existence, man's coping with his

[49] August Bebel, *My Life* (Chicago, 1913), pp. 66, 259. Friedrich Albert Lange, *The History of Materialism*, tr. Ernest Chester Thomas (New York, 1925), p. xxvii. Lange defined the core of the Social Question as "the struggle against the struggle for existence." Also, ibid. Vol. III, p. 26. Friedrich Albert Lange, *Über Politik und Philosophie*, ed. Georg Eckert (Duisburg, 1968), pp. 15–16.

[50] Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 172.

[51] Marx, *Letters to Dr. Kugelmann*, p. 111.

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environment, was a universal, biological fact, then it followed that all societies simply constituted varying social initial conditions under which this struggle took place. And all the social reforms and experiments, even when consciously undertaken, were just so many social variations whose relative efficacy would be tested in the struggle for existence. Perhaps socialists never knew how to confute Spencer's charge that socialist societies eventuating in a "coming slavery" would see their institutions and creativity decline, and their populations diminish in the struggle with the environment and their fellows.[52] Accordingly, Engels tried at different times to confute Darwin in different ways that were themselves inconsistent with each other. To Lavrov he declared that with the development of modern production, "the struggle for existence . . . is thus transformed into a struggle for pleasure, . . . and to this stage the categories derived from the animal kingdom are no longer applicable."[53] To which the sociobiologist would cogently respond: pleasure too is a biological category, and pleasure-seeking societies will also be tested in the biological arena of the struggle for existence. Certainly, man, with a more highly developed nervous system, when his livelihood is secure, seeks the more intense pleasures of the arts and sciences, and makes great advances. When, however, standards of living are threatened, and unemployment, misery, or starvation ensue, the primacy of "eating" re-dominates in social life, making for what Engels regarded as the basis for the truth of historical materialism. The pleasures of both sexuality and science take their turn only when the more elementary needs are satisfied. Yet even then the kinds of society to which they give rise are finally tested by their relative efficacy in the struggle for existence. There was no warrant, short of a metaphysical optimism, for believing that science and the mode of production would make the struggle for existence obsolete, and confirm mankind in near-perpetual pleasure, without also achieving degeneration.

But Engels did not persist in this line of reasoning; it too obviously contravened his own derivation of historical materialism. Instead, he tried to restore a Lamarckian theory of evolution in place of Darwinian natural selection. "Evolution through adaptation," Engels argued, "is primary," and "without need for selection and Malthusianism."[54] More in keeping with the model of historical materialism, Engels argued that the needs that arose under the primitive mode of production of proto-man were actually the basis for the transition from ape to man. "The need led to the creation of its organ," Engels wrote

[52] The effort of Paul Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, to reply to Spencer was so feeble and pathetically sarcastic that Engels evidently avoided any comment. See Paul Lafargue, "A Few Words with Herbert Spencer," *To-Day*, No. 6 (June, 1884), pp. 421–26. Friedrich Engels, Paul and Laura Lafargue, *Correspondence*, tr. Yvonne Kapp (Moscow, 1959), Vol. I, pp. 200–1.

[53] Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 303.

[54] Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, tr. Clemens Dutt (New York, 1940), pp. 235–36.

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in Lamarckian fashion, that is, the requirements of their biological existence themselves eventuated in advances in biological organs, as was analogously the case with the social mode of production.[55] Thus, said Engels, our ancestors gradually learned to adapt their hands in the many centuries of transition from ape to man; there had been an "inheritance of the resulting special development of muscles." "Thus the hand is not only the organ of labour, it is also the product of labour." And similarly, the need to speak to each other arose when men banded together in work: "The need led to the creation of its organ; the undeveloped larynx of the ape was slowly but surely transformed. . . ." [56]

Engels's theory of evolution was indeed more teleological and inventive than Marx's effort in trying to make the chemical effects of the soil more primary. The Lamarckian standpoint, with its creational needs, and the inheritance of acquired characteristics, did blend more isomorphically with Marx's economic-technological outlook, and the social transmission of culture. What it lacked, and what Darwin had, was the emphasis on the notion of "struggle" which linked up with Marx's affirmation of "class struggle." The Lamarckian theory, on the other hand, with its account of the origin of novel organs seemed the proper counterpart of Marx's theory of the origin of novel technology; it seemed a projection in nature of one whole side of *Das Kapital*, even as it omitted another. Engels himself could never bring the two together. He criticized Darwin's "selection by the pressure of over-population" by noting that "the weakest in many respects might also survive," and that the "survival of the fittest" did not necessarily mean that of the strongest. But then Darwin had been well aware that natural selection might make for retrogression.[57] Finally Engels fell back on the Hegelian tautology. "The main thing is: that each advance in organic life is at the same time a regression. . . ." [58] Obviously, when an object changes, it ceases to be in some respect what it was; but this tautology has no bearing on whether a regression is taking place towards the kind of simplified structure characteristic of parasites, or whether the novel traits make for survival in a greater variety of environments. The Marxist editor of Engels's book, J. B. S. Haldane, a brilliant mathematical geneticist who later found the Stalinist-Lysenkoist mutation in biological theory lethal for his own scientific thinking, simply interjected a footnote to Engels's Lamarckian construction: "The majority of biologists doubt this today." [59] But it is to be observed that Engels never made public his

[55] Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, tr. Clemens Dutt (New York, 1940), p. 288.
[56] Ibid. pp. 281, 288.
[57] "What you say about progress being only occasional and retrogression not uncommon, I agree to. . . ." Letter of Charles Darwin to Charles Lyell, 18 Feb. 1860, in *More Letters of Charles Darwin*, ed. Francis Darwin and A. C. Seward, Vol. I (London, 1903), p. 142.
[58] Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 236.
[59] Loc. cit.

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dissatisfactions with Darwin or his Lamarckian preference. For all purposes, he remained in the public eye a socialist Darwinian, proud to join together Marx with Darwin as comrades in the same scientific revolution.

ENGELS never apparently fell into the kind of gloom that led Marx to read interestedly the writings of his young friend, Edwin Ray Lankester, on the degeneration of species and societies in the workings of evolution. The young Lankester was later to become known as the greatest zoologist in Britain.[60] During Marx's last years, he became his friend, giving him advice on the choice of doctors for his family.[61] Lankester contributed to biological theory a remarkable analysis of the degeneration of species that ran athwart any evolutionary optimism. He defined " degeneration " as " a gradual change of the structure in which the organism becomes adapted to less varied and less complex conditions of life," with an ensuing " loss of organization making the descendant far simpler or lower than its ancestor." There were social models of " degenerative evolution " in Lankester's mind. As Rome had degenerated " when possessed of the riches of the Ancient world," he wrote, thus had shrimps, lizards, mites, barnacles, rotifers degenerated. And, Lankester warned his own Victorian contemporaries: " We have at least reason to fear that we may be degenerate. Possibly we are drifting, tending to the condition of intellectual Barnacles or Accidians. It is possible for us—just as the Accidian throws away its tail and eye, and sinks into a quiescent state of inferiority—to reject the good gift of reason. . . . " Lankester was indeed a sombre scientific Jeremiah: " With regard to ourselves, the white races of Europe . . . it is well to remember that we are subject to the general law of Evolution, and are likely to degenerate as to progress." [62]

Marx read Lankester's essay; when he asked of a Russian correspondent in 1881 whether it had been translated, he added, what was so rare for Marx, that its author " is a friend of mine." [63] In 1859, Marx had averred confidently that when mankind put a given problem on its historical agenda, this signified that it was both soluble and would be solved. But when he commended Lankester's essay, the last vestige of the Hegelian dialectic of progress was evidently disintegrating under the Darwinian impact. Darwin, contemplating the decline of the

[60] " Since Huxley's day no one has left so deep a mark on zoological science, . . ." Sir J. Arthur Thomson, *The Great Biologists* (*London*, 1932, p. 161. " [He] was for long the dominating figure among British zoologists," E. S. G., " Edwin Ray Lankester, 1847–1929," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London*, Series B. Vol. CVI, (1930) and Edwin S. Goodrich, " The Scientific Work of Edwin Ray Lankester," *Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science*, Vol. 74 (1931), p. 378. Also, Gilbert C. Bowne, " Fifty Years of the ' Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science ' under the editorship of Sir E. Ray Lankester," Ibid. Vol. 64 (1919), pp. 1–7.

[61] Marx and Engels, *Correspondence 1846–1895*, pp. 388, 314.

[62] E. Ray Lankester, *Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism* (London, 1880), pp. 17, 18, 19, 31, 32, 33, 59, 60.

[63] Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence* (1965), p. 302.

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Greek and Spanish civilizations, had concluded that such retrogression "has too often occurred in the history of the world. We must remember that progress is no invariable rule." [64] Marx did not dispute as Lankester and Darwin accumulated the evidence for degenerative evolution.

DESPITE their many years' effort, Marx and Engels never did arrive at a clear analysis of the relation between Darwinian evolution and their own social theories. Both they and their followers employed several alternative theoretical models rather arbitrarily, eclectically, and sometimes inconsistently. We might distinguish these several theoretical models:

**1.** That the Darwinian law of natural selection was universally valid, and that the struggle for existence under later capitalist conditions took the form of a struggle of classes;

**2.** That the Darwinian struggle for existence took its extreme competitive form among animals, but that a social instinct had emerged among human beings which was the ultimate source of the trend towards socialist society, transcending the Darwinian individualistic survival of the fittest;

**3.** That the Darwinian struggle for existence has its terminating social exemplification in bourgeois competition, and that it ceases to be applicable in a consciously planned socialist society;

**4.** That in all human history, the social structures and social and cultural forces make for laws of sociology that are irreducible to biological laws;

**5.** That the principle of historical materialism was a corollary of biological laws, especially the Darwinian struggle for existence, for all cases of social-technical livelihood;

**6.** That the advent of socialism would be the outcome of the struggle of a working class, moved by the biological drive of sheer physical misery, to survive;

**7.** That the advent of socialism would be due to the competitive superiority of socialist variations in economic organization over the prevailing capitalist type;

**8.** That under socialist society natural selection would operate, given equal opportunities for all citizens, in such a way as to produce a greater number of highly endowed human beings;

**9.** That under capitalist society, the upper classes degenerated according to biological laws of parasitism, while the lower classes degenerated through physical deprivations, so that in accordance with natural selection, such societies would lose their capacity for survival.

**10.** That the Darwinian-Malthusian struggle for existence ceased to be valid in highly advanced technological societies where the develop-

[64] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 2nd ed. (reprinted, A. L. Burt Co., N.Y.), pp. 160, 161.

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ment of science would release energies and life-giving processes that would exceed or equal the increase in population, and where, in any case, the limitation of population was always available as an alternative for conscious planning.

**11.** That the socialistic evolution of human societies might tend to eliminate precisely those members with individualistic initiative, and encourage traits of conformity and parasitism which might lead to the degeneration of the human race.

THE various socialist theories, from Marx and Engels onwards, fell by and large into two classes with respect to their views on social evolutionary mechanisms: a "soft-line" group held that a "social instinct" was a biological basis of the socialist tendency, whereas the "hard-line" group placed the emphasis on competition for material gain, strife, aggression. Engels wrote to the Russian populist intellectual, Peter Lavrov, in 1875, that in his opinion "the social instinct was one of the most essential levers of the evolution of man from the ape." [65] But there was a political disadvantage, from Engels's standpoint, in basing one's strategy on a "social instinct." For if a social instinct existed, it might cross the boundaries of class, uniting both the capitalists and proletarians in a shared humanity. One would be back to the ethics of love, which Engels derided in the philosophy of Feuerbach; the way would be opened to Fabian reformism which renounced class struggle as the means to socialism; or could the "social instinct" by some ideological legerdemain be held to be confined to the workers' ranks? So Engels conceded to Lavrov that perhaps in Russia, the "psychological" method might have the advantage, and "a propaganda journal that appeals to the moral sense" would there be justified. Not so in Germany, however, "where false sentimentality has done and still does so much damage," and where "it is hatred rather than love that is needed. . . ." This sounded like the classical Darwinian struggle for existence, and it left the "social instinct" high and dry. Moreover, was "false sentimentality" a trait making for degenerative evolution, the consequence of a religious variation not conducive to survival? Nonetheless the idea of a "social instinct" had much appeal to some leading Marxists. Karl Kautsky, for instance, argued at first in 1894 that Marxism was not in any sense the logical or necessary consequence of Darwinism, and that historical materialism and the socialist movement were simply based on people acting on behalf of their interests under given social conditions. 10 years later, however, Kautsky affirmed that the emergence of the "social instinct" was a pillar of the materialist conception of history. Nevertheless, he still repudiated the effort to found an ethical socialism such as moved men like Edward Bernstein and Hermann Cohen; he had no use for their allegiance to the Kantian "moral law, standing

[65] Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 304.

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outside of space and time. . . . " The source of the socialist ethic, he argued, was in the " altruistic feelings " whose evolutionary genesis Darwin had depicted in *The Descent of Man,* although the " social instinct," limited at first to the domain of one's own group, did not embrace foreign ones. But that too was evolving, Kautsky noted, for the Social Democrats were extending the altruistic domain more widely than ever before, superseding gradually the competition that was the strife of individuals.[66] Kautsky's views on the " social instinct " were cited and adopted by the eminent Dutch astronomer-socialist, Anton Pannekoek, who added that though the Darwinian theory of evolution applied to the animal world, it was replaced when the " man " stage was reached by the Marxist theory of social evolution.[67] Pannekoek was most concerned to draw the line between the socialist Darwinians and " the bourgeois Darwinists "; the latter, he said, claimed " that the extermination of the weak is natural and that it is necessary in order to prevent the corruption of the race. . . ." But " in nature itself, in the animal world, we find that the weak are protected. . . . "[68] The " anarchist prince," Peter Kropotkin, was writing abundantly on this theme especially in his celebrated *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution,* and both Kautsky and Pannekoek cited Kropotkin's writings.[69]

The hard-line Darwinian Marxists, however, talked little of a " social instinct." They tended to stress the fighting aggressive solidarity of the workers in class struggle, and above all, their belief that not only would the degenerate bourgeois elements be eliminated in this struggle, but also that under socialism, the kind of social selection that would take place would coincide with the survival of the fittest in a biological sense. As Enrico Ferri put it: " The Darwinian law of natural selection functions then even in human society. Those who deny the proposition," he said, " fail to see that the disastrous effects of modern, retrograde, social selection are only confirmations of the Darwinian law of the 'survival of the fittest.' . . . [Socialism] will necessarily correct the ill effects of natural and social selection. . . . Then in truth the result of the struggle for existence will be the survival of the best and this for the very reason that in a wholesome environment the victory is won by the healthiest individuals. Social Darwinism, then, as a continuation and completion of natural (biological) Darwinism, will result in a selection of the best."[70] Social Darwinism at its inception meant socialist Darwinism, and socialist leaders entirely agreed with the charge that the famed pathologist, Rudolf Virchow, had

[66] Karl Kautsky, *Ethics and the Materialist Conception of History,* tr. John B. Askew, 4th ed., revised (Chicago, 1907), pp. 102, 71, 156.
[67] Anton Pannekoek, *Marxism and Darwinism,* tr. Nathan Weiser (Chicago, 1912), pp. 36, 37, 41, 45.
[68] Ibid. p. 39.
[69] Kautsky, " Darwinismus und Marxismus," *Die Neue Zeit,* Vol. XIII (1894–95), p. 711. Pannekoek, op. cit., p. 37.
[70] Enrico Ferri, *Darwin and Modern Science,* pp. 55–56.

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hurled at the Congress of Naturalists in 1877 at Munich that "Darwinism leads directly to socialism." [71] It was perhaps natural that the "hard-line" Darwinian, Enrico Ferri, was the leader of the insurrectionary left wing of the Italian Socialist Party, but August Bebel, the talented working man who led the German Social Democratic Party, also argued that whereas in the bourgeois society, it was not "the best or the most able" who rose to "social pre-eminence," but often "the worst and the most cunning," that under socialism, where every person would have his chance for an "untrammelled development," Darwinism would "be consciously and expediently applied to all human beings." [72] Socialism in other words would make possible the differential survival of the best strains in much the same way as the cattle breeder consciously selects those variations most favourable for his purpose. Spencer, on the contrary, forecast that socialism would make for a higher differential survival of the unintelligent and stupid. This the socialist Darwinians denied. The equality of opportunity and conscious planning alike, they maintained would favour the survival of the superior.

What the socialist Darwinists were, in effect, doing was to argue that though the "survival of the fittest" was a universal pattern, the traits that operationally defined the "fittest" varied from one social environment to another, varied from capitalist to socialist systems. The "fittest" under socialism would actually coincide more with those traits which would have been conducive to survival in an egalitarian biological struggle for existence. This indeed was the kind of reasoning that Karl Pearson, the great figure in mathematical biostatistics, explicated powerfully in his youth when he was indeed a Marxist socialist. There were those, wrote Pearson in 1887, who argued that "Socialism would destroy the rewards of successful competition, and so weaken the incentive to that individual energy. . . ." Quite

[71] Ibid. p. 13. Bebel, *Woman and Socialism*, p. 255. Cf. Wilhelm Bölsche, *Haeckel: His Life and Work* (Philadelphia,1906), pp. 284–285. The debate between Ernst Haeckel and Rudolf Virchow at the Congress of Naturalists at Munich aroused great interest among socialists. Cf. Ferri, op. cit. p. 13. So much drama surrounded this encounter that it is sometimes overlooked that neither of the protagonists heard the other's speech. Cf. Ernst Haeckel, *Freedom in Science and Teaching* (*New York*, 1879), pp. xxvi–xxvii. Haeckel's argument was indeed a mixture of inconsistencies. On the one hand, he argued that the evolutionary theory of descent had no bearing whatsoever on the arguments for or against socialism. On the other, he held that the theories of natural selection and survival of the fittest were aristocratic in their implication, and contrary to the democracy espoused by Social Democracy. Thus Haeckel was maintaining that Darwinism was both ideological and non-ideological, that it had nothing to do with socialism but that it was anti-socialist. (Ibid. pp. 9–94, xxv. Also, T. H. Huxley, ibid. pp. xviii–xx). There was evidently a generation gap between the two sides of the debate. The "establishment," the chief naturalists of Berlin, were with one exception opposed to Darwin's theory (p. 115), whereas the adherents to Darwinism came eagerly from Germany's "ablest youth," (p. 8), especially in the provincial universities (pp. xxix, 119–120).

[72] August Bebel, *Woman and Socialism*, tr. Meta L. Stern (Hebe) (New York, 1910), pp. 254–56. Serge Hughes, *The Rise and Fall of Modern Italy* (New York, 1967), pp. 39, 73.

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the contrary, he said, the "healthy rivalry of individual workers" under socialism would supersede the rewards of "anti-social cunning." By removing "the pecuniary privileges of birth, and the class exclusiveness of education," socialism would be eradicating "a great bar to the survival, or rather to the pre-eminence, of the fittest"; socialism was thus "certainly not opposed to the teachings of Evolution." Indeed, socialism was also "the logical outcome of the law of Malthus," because it would be far easier to limit population when one class could not profit from the numerical increase of the other.[73] Darwin's wish "that the superior and not the inferior members of the groups should be the parents of the future, is far more likely to be realized in a socialistic than in an individualistic state."[74] Indeed, much in Engels's fashion, Pearson derived the whole materialist conception of history as a corollary of Darwinian evolution. "According to the Darwinian theory," he wrote, "evolution is chiefly brought about by sexual selection and the struggle for food."[75] Hence, "the future Darwin of the history of civilization" would recognize that "the history of sex and the history of property" were the basic themes of his subject. As Engels had similarly written: "the determining factor in history" is of a "twofold character," the "production of the means of existence," on the one hand, and on the other, "the propagation of the species," that is, the social organization is determined by "the stage of development of labour on the one hand and of the family on the other."[76]

What, however, if society did not evolve towards a socialism that favoured superior elements? What if society degenerated as Rome had, and indeed Spain? The Belgian Marxist Emile Vandervelde and his collaborators were prepared to explore the possibility and the workings of degenerative evolution. "Degenerative evolution," they wrote, "conveys the idea of decline, of decay, and of degeneration, such as the atrophy of the organs of locomotion in Sacculina. . . ." Abandoning the doctrine of universal progress, they recognized that societies could decline, persist at a low level of equilibrium, or even become extinct as species have. "The tendency of decadence is always towards the degenerative and eliminatory selection of superior elements." As institutions ceased to be "functional or in any way useful," they disappeared by atrophy as organs do. In this fashion not only had the Romans degenerated but also the Peruvian and Aztec societies, and such was "the decline of the Negro kingdoms which existed

[73] Karl Pearson, "The Moral Basis of Socialism" (1887), in *The Ethic of Freethought and Other Addresses and Essays*, 2nd ed., revised (London, 1901), pp. 312, 313, 319, 323.

[74] Cited in Nicholas Pastore, *The Nature-Nurture Controversy* (New York, 1949), pp. 39–40, from Karl Pearson, *The Chances of Death* (New York, 1897), p. 138. Bebel cited Pearson's writings. See *Woman and Socialism*, p. 252.

[75] Karl Pearson, "Socialism and Sex" (1886), in *The Ethic of Freethought*, pp. 414–15.

[76] Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) (New York, 1942), p. 5.

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during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Southern and Western Africa, and which are merely represented nowadays by wretched little tribes." [77] Sometimes, a technology, such as "the persistent cutting down of trees," by adversely affecting the water supply, could bring about, as in Montenegro, the disappearance of great communities.[78] Thus social forces and social innovations, "artificial selection," might eventuate in degeneration and extinction, as took place under natural selection.

In Chicago, during these years, the managing editor of the newly founded *The Journal of Political Economy*, Thorstein B. Veblen, was reviewing most of the books of the European Marxists with the sympathy of an academic fellow-partisan. He responded warmly to Enrico Ferri's socialistic version of the "survival of the fittest," and cited the Italian's advice to sociological students "to turn to Karl Marx as the only competent guide" if sociology and political economy were "to take a place as modern sciences of the post-Darwinian epoch." [79] A decade later, Veblen could accurately report that "Darwinism has largely supplanted Hegelianism" among socialist theorists.[80] A rare philosopher such as the idealistic Italian, Antonio Labriola, might still cling to the Hegelian loyalties of the youthful Marx; thus Labriola, while conceding that there were broad analogies between them, denied that Marxism was "derivative" in any sense from Darwinism. The Marxist standpoint, Labriola affirmed, was an "epigenetic conception of history." [81] A leading American socialist theorist, Ernest Untermann, intervened to say that both sides were right, that it could be proved that both Hegelianism and Darwinism led to socialism.[82] At which point one might well have observed: in the realm of ideology, everything can lead to socialism; it makes no difference what one's philosophical postulates are; the same wished-for conclusion will follow. At this point, one's sense of scientific logic vanishes.

The impact of Darwin's work did finally dislodge from Marx's thought such teleological concepts as "alienation." Such notions were still part of his writings so long as the heritage of Feuerbachian

[77] Jean Demoor, Jean Massart, Emile Vandervelde, *Evolution By Atrophy in Biology and Sociology*, tr. Mrs Chalmers Mitchell (New York, 1899), pp. 22, 291, 288, 317.

[78] Ibid. p. 289.

[79] Thorstein B. Veblen, "Enrico Ferri, Socialisme et Science Positive," *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. V (1896–97), p. 103. Reprinted in Thorstein Veblen, *Essays, Reviews and Reports*, ed. Joseph Dorfman (Clifton, 1973), pp. 449–55.

[80] Thorstein Veblen, "The Socialist Economics of Karl Marx and his Followers," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. XX (1906), reprinted ed. *The Place of Science in Modern Civilization* (New York, 1919), p. 429.

[81] Antonio Labriola, *Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History*, tr. Charles H. Kerr (Chicago, 1908), p. 135. Antonio Labriola, *Socialism and Philosophy*, tr. Ernest Untermann (Chicago, 1906), pp. 99. Labriola's effort to restore Hegelian overtones to Marxism is discussed in Edmund E. Jacobitti, "Labriola, Croce, and Italian Marxism (1895–1910)," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. XXXVI (1975), pp. 300 ff.

[82] Labriola, *Socialism and Philosophy*, p. 250.

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materialism persisted. But they became, as Engels said, untranslatable or meaningless in the post-Darwinian era.[83] To "the most ultimate question"—"what is meaningful?"—asked of him by the American journalist, John Swinton in 1888, Marx, gazing "upon the roaring sea in front and the restless multitude upon the beach," answered "in a deep and solemn tone," "Struggle."[84] Struggle was universal—the pattern of life and existence. Marx in his later years simply refused to allow ethical ideas such as "justice," or "right," or even "alienation" to obtrude into political thinking. He derided such notions as "mythology"; and when in 1880 he largely wrote the preamble for the programme of the French Socialist Party, he insisted on omitting such language, thereupon arousing "much outpouring of vials of wrath" on the part of socialists and old Communards. "The men who had fought in the Commune and returned to France after the amnesty," wrote Lafargue, felt that they were the true representatives of French socialism, and they were repelled by Marx's programme of "scientific socialism" which spoke not a word of "injustice" or "inhumanity." What was Marx's "scientific socialism" but a proposition allegedly as ethically neutral as the theory of natural selection—a theory which envisaged the next stage of human evolution? As Lafargue described it, Marx's 1880 preamble "said, in so many words, that capitalist society," as it gradually eliminates small property holders, "bears in its own bosom a new collectivist society."[85] It presented the "collective form" as the only historical alternative that could be actualized. Though Marx still used the word "freedom," it bore for him all the connotations of a historicist "recognition of necessity." The old Communards on the contrary found it hard to renounce their sense of historical free will, their historical voluntarism.

Kautsky and the other intellectual spokesmen of the Second International were thus on firm ground when they interpreted Marx's thought as empirically linked with the Darwinian evolutionary standpoint, and as having "completely deposed the moral ideal as the directing factor of social evolution." Occasionally, Kautsky acknowledged, "the influence of a moral ideal" would "break through", but Marx "always endeavours and rightly so to banish it where he can . . . Science has only to do with the recognition of the necessary."[86]

Thus Marx, Engels, and their disciples evolved into socialist

[83] Engels wrote to his translator, Florence Kelley Wischnewetzky, in 1886 that "the semi-Hegelian language of a good many passages of my old book is not only untranslatable but has lost the greater part of its meaning even in German." Karl Marx, *Letters to Americans, 1848–1895*, tr. Leonard E. Mina (New York, 1953), p. 151.

[84] John Swinton, *John Swinton's Travels. Current Views and notes of forty days in France and England* (New York, 1880). Swinton's life is delineated in W. J. G., "John Swinton," *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. IX (New York, 1936), p. 252.

[85] Paul Lafargue, "Socialism in France from 1876 to 1896," *The Fortnightly Review*, Vol. LXII, N. S. (1897), pp. 451–52. Samuel Bernstein, *The Beginnings of Marxian Socialism in France* (New York, 1933), pp. 159–60.

[86] Kautsky, *Ethics and the Materialist Conception of History*, pp. 201–02. "The way in which Kautsky understood Marxism was very largely determined by Darwin's

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Darwinians and sociobiologists. Their reluctances and reservations were swallowed up in the general Darwinian evolutionary movement. " Biological sociologists " in their time, they would not find themselves fundamentally at variance with the " sociobiologists " of today.

theory of evolution," notes Dieter Schuster, " Karl Kautsky," *Marxism, Communism and Western Society: A Comparative Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, ed. C. D. Kernig (New York, 1973), p. 1.


# ECONOMICS OF PLANNING

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**VOL. 14—NO. 1—1978**

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# "The Menshevistic Idealist": Abram Deborin*

Aleksandr M. Nekrich

I WAS very intimately acquainted with Academician Abram Moiseevich Deborin during the last 18 years of his life. In the autumn of 1945, after returning from the war, I was accepted for graduate studies at the Department [*sektor*] of Modern and Contemporary History of the Institute of History of the USSR Academy of Sciences in Moscow. Academician Deborin was the head of that department. We quickly took a liking to each other and, in spite of our great age difference, became fast friends. At one time I was the *sektor partorg* [organizer of the Party cell] and scientific secretary.

In 1950, not long after defending my *kandidat* [Ph.D.] dissertation, Academician Deborin offered me the opportunity to be his scientific assistant and I gratefully accepted. Due to the anti-semitic campaign I did not have any work following my dissertation defence; thus Deborin's offer could not have come at a better time. Approximately one year later I became a scientific worker at the Institute, but the friendship with Deborin was to continue right up until his death on 8 March 1963. After his passing I was a member of the Academy of Science's commission entrusted with the task of preparing a posthumous edition of his works. But more on that later.

Abram Moiseevich Deborin was one of the most educated of Russian Marxists. His real name was Joffe, and while Deborin at first was only a pseudonym, it later became part of his surname. He was born in 1881, in Kaunas (Lithuania) in a poor Jewish family. In the early years of his life he learned metal craftsmanship. In 1897, at the age of 16, Deborin became a participant in illegal Marxist circles. In 1903 he fled from Russia because he was being pursued by the tsarist police. During his years in emigration he graduated from Berne University (Switzerland). It was there that he became close with G. V. Plekhanov and came to understand many of his views. Deborin returned to Russia in 1908 and took an active part in the struggle against tsarism. During the revolution of 1917 he was president of the soviet of the Ukrainian city of Poltava for a brief time.

Deborin's political outlook after 1907 was that of a Menshevik; he entered the VKP (b) in 1928 on the suggestion of S. Ordzhonikidze who also recommended him. Deborin's most famous work, which has been reprinted many times and translated into many languages, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Dialectical Materialism*, was written on the eve of the Russian revolution, in 1916. During the period 1922–30 Deborin

* This article is a fragment from Aleksandr M. Nekrich's MS "Forsake Fear."

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was editor of the central theoretical organ of the Communist Party *Under the Banner of Marxism.* Those were the years of flourishing activity for Deborin: he taught in the Sverdlov Communist University in Moscow, the Institute of the Red Professors and the Communist Academy, and also worked as assistant director of the Marx and Engels Institute. He became the most authoritative figure in the field of Marxist philosophy. As an orthodox Marxist, Deborin took part in the crushing of various "heretical" movements in Soviet Marxist philosophy, including the so-called "mechanists." He fought mercilessly with them "on the theoretical front", possibly not realizing that for the personal fates of those with mechanist views the accusations of "heresy" could bring tragic consequences.

In 1929 Deborin, along with a group of other communist social scientists, was elected a member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Party influence was quickly consolidated in the Academy of Sciences and soon it was fully under Party control. Subsequently Deborin held high posts in the Academy hierarchy, even after his works fell into disfavour.

The entire following generation of philosophers—Mitin, Iudin, Rantsevich, Luppol and Sten—were students of Deborin. The first two were later to become close supporters of Stalin in the area of ideology, while the other three perished during the great purges. Incidentally, Sten taught Marxist dialectics to Stalin, and, according to rumour, was not very satisfied with the knowledge of his student.

THE key turning-point in the fate of Deborin was his refusal in 1930 to proclaim Stalin the *coryphaeus* of philosophical science and the leader in the forefront of philosophy. I learned of this from Abram Moiseevich during one of our many confidential talks.

This is what he told me: during the summer of 1930 three of his students—Iudin, Mitin and Rantsevich—came to Abram Moiseevich and began telling him that certain other of his students, such as Luppol (who was an academician) had ties with the Trotskyites and that Abram Moiseevich had to disassociate himself from them completely. The word "disassociate" (*otmezhevat'sya*) was very popular in the Party's lexicon of the time and, indeed, has not lost its meaning even today. Abram Moiseevich was astonished; he was certain that Luppol was not a Trotskyite. Therefore he had no basis to abandon or condemn Luppol or other students of his. This, however, was not the main topic of the conversation: Iudin, Mitin and Rantsevich attempted to convince Deborin that Stalin was not only the leader of all of the Party's practical work, but a great theoretician in the area of Marxist philosophy as well. They coaxed Deborin, "You, of all people, such a respected Marxist philosopher, must declare and proclaim Comrade Stalin the *vozhd'* (great leader) in the forefront of philosophy." "But," Deborin naïvely responded, "Stalin has no works to his name on

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philosophy." They talked for almost three hours. As they left, Iudin, Mitin and Rantsevich again asked Deborin to think over what they had told him—to renounce his Trotskyite students and declare Stalin the head in the field of philosophy. "That way, Abram Moiseevich, you can always remain our beloved and respected teacher." Deborin was taken aback.

Very soon after this, during his next meeting with the head of the agitation department of the Central Committee, Stetsky, Deborin heard much the same story which he had heard from Iudin, Mitin and Rantsevich. Stetsky told him frankly, "Things are approaching the point where there will be but one leader, one *vozhd'* both for practical work and in the area of theory. There can be no more than one *vozhd'* in the Party."

Some time later I heard the other half of this story, which appeared true, although I had no proof of its authenticity then, nor do I now. According to this story, Deborin, highly esteeming Stalin as a practical figure, unwittingly compared him with another great practical worker —Friedrich Engels. Deborin wrote Stalin a letter in which he remarked about the great collaboration between Marx and Engels and proposed to Stalin the same sort of collaboration with himself, Deborin. Upon reading this Stalin is said to have snorted, "Big deal! Engels!" Stalin did not hesitate to compare himself with Marx, but he was not willing to take on the role of Engels. . . . This possibly apocryphal story adds psychological detail both to the portrait of Stalin and to Deborin's own way of thinking. Stetsky's prediction, however, was soon fulfilled.

Deborin's former students, Iudin, Mitin and Rantsevich, published a harsh article against any deviations from the orthodox "Party Line." Soon Deborin was accused of being a "Menshevistic idealist." The expression itself was nonsense, for if Deborin was a Menshevik, his philosophy could not possibly be idealist; the Mensheviks were a Marxist party and always based their position on the Marxist philosophy of dialectical materialism.

Stalin thus performed a very clever sleight of hand; he combined the two concepts most hated by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: "idealist" and "Menshevik." No one could explain what this actually meant, but after 1931 numerous articles appeared which were aimed at Deborin and his "crew" (*shkolka*). In one of the latest editions of the *Dictionary of Philosophy* the term "Menshevistic idealism" is not listed, and the information on A. M. Deborin states that he and his group "underestimated the Leninist stage of the development of Marxist philosophy and insufficiently stressed the basic contradiction between the Marxian and Hegelian dialectic." [1] These were rather mild words and are in stark contrast to the curses hurled against "Menshevistic idealism" during the Stalinist days.

[1] *Filosofskii slovar'* (3rd ed., *Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury*, Moscow, 1975), p. 227.

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After Deborin was declared a "Menshevistic idealist" he was kept from his work in the field of philosophy. Although he kept his status as Academician (which fully provided for all his material needs), the publishing of his works was prohibited. Many of his students perished during the purges. Among them were such talented individuals as the philosopher Academician I. K. Luppol; the famous biologist who had been one of the leaders of the Bavarian Soviet Republic, Max Levin; and the physicist E. M. Gessen.

In Deborin's office I saw heaps of manuscripts which had collected during 25 years of ostracism. Abram Moiseevich, however, did not become despondent. His keen scholarly mind craved activity. During the pre-war years he wrote a series of articles on the history of German fascist ideology. When he attempted to have a major work on this topic published after the war, however, it did not make it past the proof-reader. Thus, the book never appeared. During the Second World War Deborin took part in drawing up the programme of the war-time activity of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Gradually, however, his importance declined, and finally he was made into a regular senior scientific worker of the Institute of History of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

IN 1956, following the 20th congress of the CPSU, Deborin petitioned the Central Committee of the CPSU to reconsider its resolution of 1931 regarding the so-called "Menshevistic idealism." The Politburo put A. I. Mikoyan in charge of examining this matter.

I remember perfectly all the anxious days before Abram Moiseevich was to go to the Kremlin for the meeting with Mikoyan. He was very apprehensive; indeed, the matter concerned the work of his entire scientific career. At that time Deborin lived in the building belonging to the Academy of Sciences at Lenin Prospect 13. The way to the Kremlin led through 20th Anniversary of the October Revolution Square and then along Dimitrov Street. While the car he was riding in was crossing the square, it suddenly broke down. Only seven or eight minutes remained before the appointed time for the meeting. But a policeman came to Abram Moiseevich's rescue and so he arrived to see Mikoyan on time.

He returned from the meeting extremely excited, but satisfied. He told me that Mikoyan received him cordially and inquired about everything, especially what "Menshevistic idealism" was. Deborin laughed: "I told Anastas Ivanovich that I have been trying to understand what it is for 25 years, but still have not been able to figure it out." Mikoyan shook his head, laughed, and promised to support Deborin's request to have the absurd accusation removed. Deborin was encouraged. But things did not go at all as expected. When Mikoyan proposed revoking the CC resolution on "Menshevistic idealism," strong opposition was expressed by the then still influential Party ideologue P. P. Pospelov,

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who was secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and at the same time director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. At the meeting of the secretariat of the CC, Pospelov objected to the political rehabilitation of Deborin and the revoking of the 1931 CC decision, claiming that this would lead to the erosion of the ideological base of the Party. In his argument Pospelov depended on the support of a rather influential cohort of Stalinist social scientists who had risen through crushing Deborin and his "crew." Among them were Pavel Iudin and Mark Mitin, both academicians, both members of the Central Committee of the CPSU who enjoyed reputations as Party intellectuals. Moreover, both at different times had had connections with the publishing of the main theoretical organ of the communist movement which was published at first in Belgrade and later in Prague (*Problems of Peace and Socialism*). Iudin had also been the Soviet ambassador in Belgrade and in Peking. After his return from Peking, Iudin set up at his dacha in the academic village of Mozzhinka (70 kilometres from Moscow) a kind of Chinese museum where in a prominent place was exhibited . . . a portrait of Mao. . . . Iudin died several years ago.

Mark Mitin continues to prosper until the present day, despite serious accusations made against him by the families of executed philosophers. The widow of Academician Luppol accused him not only of aiding in the annihilation of her husband, but also of placing his own (Mitin's) name on an article written by Luppol for the *Great Encyclopedia.* In doing so, Mitin is accused of having added but one phrase to the original article—namely, that Luppol was an unmasked enemy of the people!

NEVERTHELESS, something was done for Deborin. In particular, the ban on printing his works was lifted.

I helped Abram Moiseevich compile a plan for printing his works in several volumes. In the end only three books were published. In 1961 a collection of his articles from various periods was printed under the title *Philosophy and Politics.* In 1958, the first volume of his *Social-Political Doctrines of the Modern and Contemporary Times* was published and after his death in 1967 the second volume appeared. I happened to head the commission in charge of the posthumous publication of the works of Deborin and took an active part in preparing the second volume for press.

When the ban on printing Deborin's works was finally lifted, he was already at a very advanced age and it became more difficult for him to work. Then, too, time had moved forward and new trends had appeared in philosophy which it was not easy for him to keep pace with. His life as a philosopher and scholar had been mercilessly destroyed during the years of his intellectual blossoming.

As a man, Deborin was gentle and sympathetic; this attracted

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people's hearts to him. In the last years of his life he was interested in the movement of rhythms and, as he once confided in me, was on the threshold of a most important physico-philosophical discovery: a universal law of rhythms.

DEBORIN died on 8 March 1963. One day before his death I visited him. He was lying on his back, his tired eyes only half open. When I entered, something like a friendly smile briefly came across his lips. When I asked how he was feeling, he nodded his head, as if to say, "Not bad, so-so," and then, it seemed, he dozed off into a light sleep.

The mourning ceremony took place in the conference hall of the Academy of Sciences at number 14 Volkhonka Street. We had been friends, and I had been very attached to the old man. His passing greatly saddened me. I began to think with anguish that among those coming to the funeral would be people who had persecuted him over the years, spoiled his life, closing fast before him the doors of the realm to which he had given all his thoughts—philosophy. Indeed they did come, the philosopher-murderers and marauder-academicians Iudin, Mitin and others. They all came to the funeral of their teacher whom they had not only betrayed, but defamed as well over the decades. And I suddenly realized that I had to speak at the funeral to throw it back in their faces that their crimes had not been forgotten. One woman from the Department of Historical Sciences attempted to caution me: "Aleksandr Moiseevich, don't do it. You will make very dangerous enemies. They will never forgive you for your words." A minor commotion began. The assistant academician-secretary of the Department of Historical Sciences Viktor Ivanovich Shunkov came up to me and said amicably, "Let's both speak together, only not here, but at Novodevichy Cemetery." In spite of their attempts to persuade me I refused to listen. Due to the circumstances of the times it was impossible to keep me from speaking. This all took place at the beginning of 1963, when anti-Stalinist feelings were still very strong among scholars.

My words fell into a ringing silence. Yes, there is such a silence which makes it appear that the air is ringing. I spoke in aphoristic speech about the teacher who loved all his students and never abandoned any of them. I spoke, too, of how some of his students had deserted him. And I also spoke of the labour and torment of the scholar who was blocked from his beloved work.

Having finished my speech, I cast a glance at Iudin. He stood there, his face reddened; he pointed at me and asked someone standing nearby, "Who is that?" My speech apparently made a great impression on those present. Afterwards, many came up to me and thanked me, while others just firmly squeezed my hand.

Abram Moiseevich Deborin was buried in Novodevichy Cemetery

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in Moscow. Four years after his death, thanks to our common efforts, the second volume of his works *Social-Political Doctrines of Modern and Contemporary Times* appeared. This book is on the shelf in my office in Belmont, where I am living now. And in the book is an inscription by Deborin's widow, Irina: "With good, and, I hope, long-lasting memories of the author."


**contrepoint**

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# The German-Russians' Reaction to German Invasion

**Richard M. Levine**

A SOVIET decree on the resettlement of the German-Russians living in the Volga districts, signed on 28 August 1941, and published on 8 September 1941 reads as follows:

> According to reliable information received by the military authorities, there are thousands and tens of thousands of diversionists and spies among the German population of the Volga region who are prepared to cause explosions in these regions at a signal from Germany. No Germans (living in the Volga districts) have ever reported to the Soviet authorities the presence of such great numbers of diversionists and spies. Therefore the German population of the Volga region is covering up enemies of the Soviet people and Soviet power. If diversionist acts were to take place under orders of Germany by German diversionists or spies in the Volga German Republic or neighbouring regions and there were bloodshed, the Soviet government would be forced according to martial law to adopt measures of reprisal against the entire German population. In order to avoid such undesirable occurrences and to forestall serious bloodshed, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR has found it necessary to resettle the entire German population of the Volga regions under the condition that those to be resettled are allotted land and given state aid to settle in new regions. Resettled Germans will be given land in the Novosibirsk and Omsk districts, the Altai region, the Kazakhstan Republic and neighbouring localities rich in land. In connection with this the National Defence Council is instructed to resettle as soon as possible all Volga Germans who will be given land in new regions.[1]

On the basis of this accusation that the German-Russian communities were filled with spies and diversionists, the Soviet Union justified the expulsion of the German-Russian population from its home. An examination of this Soviet charge is necessary as it brought great suffering to an entire segment of the Soviet population and resulted in the destruction of many of the German-Russian communities, which were more than a century and a half old. While this decree refers only to the Volga German Republic, similar measures were carried out when possible against all German-Russian settlements in the Soviet Union.

An official pardon and apology was given to the German-Russians on 29 August 1964 and published in January 1965. It reads as follows.

1 Joseph B. Schechtman, *European Population Transfers 1939–1945* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1946), p. 384.

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Article 592.—Decree of Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet: ON INTRODUCING CHANGES IN THE 28 AUG. 1941 DECREE OF THE PRESIDIUM OF THE USSR SUPREME SOVIET "ON RESETTLING THE GERMANS LIVING IN THE VOLGA DISTRICTS." (*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR*, No. 52 [1293], 28 Dec., p. 931. Complete text:) In the 28 Aug. 1941 decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On Resettling the Germans Living in the Volga Districts" large groups of Germans who were Soviet citizens were accused of actively helping and collaborating with the German fascist invaders.

Life has shown that these sweeping accusations were unfounded and were a manifestation of the arbitrary rule under the conditions of the Stalin personality cult. In actuality, during the years of the Great Patriotic War the overwhelming majority of the German population, together with the entire Soviet people, by their labour helped the Soviet Union to win victory over fascist Germany, and in the postwar years have taken an active part in Communist construction.

Thanks to the great help of the Communist Party and the Soviet state, the German population has in the intervening years taken firm root in new places of residence and is enjoying all the rights of citizens of the USSR. Soviet citizens of German nationality are working conscientiously in enterprises, on state and collective farms and in offices, and are participating actively in social and political life. Many of them are deputies to the Supreme and local Soviets of the Russian Federation and the Ukraine, Kazakh, Uzbek, Kirghiz and other Union republics and occupy administrative posts in industry and agriculture and in the Soviet Party apparatus. For their successes in work, thousands of German Soviet citizens have been awarded USSR orders and medals and hold honorary titles of the Union republics. In districts of a number of provinces, territories and republics that have a German population there are secondary and elementary schools where teaching is conducted in German or German is taught to children of school age, where radio programmes are broadcast and newspapers published regularly in German, and other cultural measures are conducted for the German population.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet resolves:

1. To repeal the section of the 28 Aug. 1941 decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On Resettling the Germans Living in the Volga Districts" (Proceedings of the Session of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, 1941, No. 9, p. 256) that contains sweeping accusations with regard to the German population living in the Volga districts.

2. Taking into consideration the fact that the German population has taken root in new places of residence in a number of republics, territories and provinces in the country, and that the regions that were its former place of residence have become populated, the Union-republic Councils of Ministers are in-

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> structed, with the aim of further developing regions that have a German population, henceforth to give help and assistance in economic and cultural construction to the German population living in the republics, with regard for its national features and interests.[2]
>
> A. Mikoyan, Chairman of the Presidium, USSR Supreme Soviet.
>
> M. Georgadze, Secretary of the Presidium.
>
> The Kremlin, Moscow, 29 Aug. 1964.
> No. 2820–VI.

Beyond issuing this statement, no attempt has been made by the Soviets to examine the accusation or the role of the government or people accused in relation to this accusation. Rather, the simple explanation of abuses of the "Stalin personality cult" has been offered, and the matter has been closed to avoid any politically troublesome criticism. A more detailed investigation of the Soviet charge will be conducted in this article.

Such an investigation is also needed in order to deal with the matter of restitution for the German-Russians for the injustice inflicted upon them. One measure of restitution accorded to some other banished Soviet nationality groups has been to resettle them in their former homes. No attempt has been made to resettle the German-Russians. (Resettlement under the present circumstances is probably not a practical measure.) Therefore, the German-Russians are faced with the problem of maintaining and re-establishing their cultural life in new surroundings. A matter for future investigation could be to determine to what degree the Soviet government has aided or hindered them in this pursuit.

Following the precedent set by Jews emigrating to Israel, at present a number of German-Russians are petitioning the Soviet government to emigrate to West Germany. It is unfortunate that the basic human right to leave a country is impossible or exceedingly difficult to exercise in the Soviet Union and could, in the case of the German-Russians, be considered a form of compensation for abuses suffered during World War II. A desire to emigrate can be based on a number of reasons—such as economic considerations, a desire to live in a freer society, etc.—that affect Soviet citizens of all nationality groups. The German-Russian attempt to emigrate might also be evidence that the German-Russians are not satisfied with their new settlements or current forms for national expression, and that to some extent the German-Russians are still suffering from measures taken against them during World War II.

[2] *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XVII, No. I, 1–8 Jan. 1965, inclusive (Ann Arbor, Michigan), p. 13.

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SINCE the German-Russians of the Soviet Union were accused of forming a fifth column of German sympathizers which willingly concealed spies and saboteurs ready to act upon the first German signal, it is necessary to examine the reactions of the German-Russians to their initial encounter with German troops to see if there was any validity in the Soviet charge. By examining the reception accorded to the Germans by the German-Russians, one can determine to what extent the German-Russian population was either already in sympathy with the German cause or predisposed to work with the Germans to overthrow communist rule.

Both published and confidential German reports will be quoted in order to show the contrast between the way the Germans reported to the public that they were greeted by the German-Russians and the way the Germans were received in reality.

When analysing the question regarding how joyously the German-Russians encountered the invading German troops, one must consider both the sources of information and for whom they were intended. One report of a candid nature can refute a great amount of material issued for propaganda purposes. Due to the fact that heavily controlled and censored societies—such as Soviet society or that which existed in National Socialist Germany—print only information in conformance with the regime's ideological position, one must pay extra attention to confidential reports in which the official stance is refuted. Robert Conquest put the matter this way:

> If a thousand documents say that the national minorities of the USSR enjoy all the autonomy they wish and one document admits that most of those who had the opportunity were involved in a mass effort to overthrow the Soviet regime, then that one document refutes the 999 others and they are no longer worth studying except as examples of official propaganda.[3]

This seems too strong a statement, but it is revealing if a large percentage of confidential documents refute the statements of thousands of commentaries issued for open or wide dissemination. Because of the large number of confidential reports at variance with published statements regarding the reception the German-Russians accorded the Germans, one must rely on the confidential reports rather than published accounts in which the purpose was to depict the Germans as liberators. According to the confidential reports, although the German-Russians did at times express joy at seeing German troops, in the majority of cases the population was described as withdrawn and distrustful about openly expressing its sentiments. Many German-Russians seemed wary of stating political views or engaging in activities which would jeopardize them should Soviet troops return.

The Germans reasoned that the lack of initial enthusiasm on the

[3] R. Conquest, *The Soviet Deportation of Nationalities* (Macmillan, London, 1960), p. 187.

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part of the German-Russians was due to the fact that they had been so thoroughly intimidated by the Bolsheviks that they trusted no one and assumed a reserved pose towards all strangers. Winning the trust of the German-Russians, it was declared, was a slow and delicate process.[4] For example, when the Germans arrived in Minsk they immediately inquired about the German-Russian settlements. It was reported that the German-Russians, despite the fact that they passed by the German barracks daily, did not venture to speak with the German troops.

The German-Russians of Minsk in return initially were not treated warmly by the German officials. Many German officials were prejudiced against the German-Russians and made statements that they might be disguised communists or perhaps they were not really German. The German-Russians, it was claimed, were too shy to press their case before the German authorities, especially since the Germans could barely understand their dialect.[5]

According to reports of 15 August 1941 and 4 September 1941 concerning the German-Russians in the Ukraine and Black Sea areas, the German-Russians had become so mistrustful and closed-mouthed under communist rule that they appeared fearful and shy upon first encounter. They were further described as being nagged by the fear that the Russians might return and hold them to account for their actions.[6] Furthermore, many German-Russians held the Germans responsible for measures taken against the German-Russians by the Soviets in response to the German attack on the Soviet Union.[7]

[4] T–81, Records of the *Deutsches Ausland-Institut*, R 561, DAI 950, "*Bericht über die Lage der Volksdeutschen*" n.d., ft. 5337316.

All documents used in this paper are located at the National Archives, Washington, D.C. and are stored on microfilm. References to documents on microfilm will be preceded by the letter "T," designating the microcopy number followed by the letter "R" designating the number of the microfilm reel within the microcopy set, followed by the "Item" number which is the identification symbol on the original folder within the captured records collections.

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The various newspapers published by the Germans in the occupied territories are available at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[5] T–81, R 294, Vo Mi 496, *Hauptmann* Hölze to the *Amtskommissar* of Minsk, 23 January 1943, ft. 2418953/54.

[6] T–81, R 551, DAI 924, "*Die Volksdeutschen im altrussischen Teil des Schwarzmeergebietes*," 4 September 1941, ft. 532670. T–454, Records of the Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territory, R 20, EAP 99/47, "*Lage des Deutschtums im Gebiet von Shitomir*," 15 August 1941, ft. 000133.

[7] T–81, R 628, DAI 998, Dr H. Stingl to E. Krause of the *Forschungsstelle des Russlanddeutschtums*, 17 March 1942, ft. 5426040.

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Apparently, in some areas the Germans received friendlier greetings than in others. Incidents were reported in which German-Russians greeted the German soldiers warmly and offered the soldiers lodging and meals.[8] Cases were mentioned in which the German-Russians greeted the German soldiers enthusiastically after the Germans had captured their village in fighting with the Soviets. These people, however, were either waiting for the Germans to enter their village or for the Soviets to come and deport them.[9] The Germans received quite an emotional welcome in some Mennonite settlements. The residents of these settlements were primarily women whose husbands had been deported by the Soviets. They were greatly relieved that people had arrived interested in aiding them.[10]

German reports of being greeted warmly did not apply only to the German-Russians but also to other Soviet nationality groups. A report to the *Deutsches Ausland-Institut* (DAI)—located in Stuttgart, the main centre for collecting information on ethnic Germans throughout the world—stated that in the Ukraine the Ukrainian population met the Germans with flowers in hand and signs proclaiming "Heil Hitler, we thank the liberators," or "Greetings to the German heroes," etc. This same report also mentions that the Ukrainian population enthusiastically participated in the persecution of the Jews.[11]

THE reports quoted above were all of a confidential nature as they were contained in personal or unpublished communiqués. German propaganda painted a different picture of the reception the German-Russians gave to the German soldiers. The impression that the majority of German articles tried to give can best be described by quoting one of them. One such article is entitled "The *Volksdeutsche* are Celebrating Again in the Path of the Advancing German Army." The first paragraph of this article starts,

> "That you have finally arrived!" cried a deeply shaken and excited woman, imploringly holding forth her arms. On her face there were tears of joy and salvation. Her hands repeatedly stroked the grey army field jackets. She drank the sounds of German from our lips. This *Volksdeutsche* stayed at her place. She had forced her way through a crowd of people surrounding the jeep in order to be first to greet the Germans in this location. Then she translated for the happy beaming people the questions and answers.

Later on in this article the German-Russians blame all their misfortunes on the Jews.[12]

[8] T–81, R 633, DAI 1130, *Stabsfeldwebel* Welke to Krause, 24 September 1941, ft. 5434085. Letter of Welke, 10 July 1941, ft. 5434087.

[9] T–81, R 529, DAI 862, Letter of August 1941, ft. 5296924. Letter of 7 October 1941, ft. 5296911. *Dokumente A aus dem Tagebuch unseres Mitarbeiters ST*, 28 August 1941, ft. 5296880.

[10] T–81, R 529, DAI 862, Extract from a letter of Doctor of Medicine E. Meier, 1941, ft. 5296912.

[11] T–81, R 529, DAI 862, Report of H. Hansen to the DAI, 3 July 1941, ft. 5296932.

[12] T-81, R 561, DAI 950, "*Wieder jubeln Volksdeutsche am Wege des deutschen Vormarsches*," by war reporter Ludwig Gross, n.d., ft. 5337322.

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In certain German periodicals such as "*Brücke Zur Heimat,*" intended for the general public, the Germans admitted that the German soldiers, rather than being greeted with flowers and cheering by the *Volksdeutsche* as they reported was the case in the Sudetenland and Poland, instead encountered in the Soviet Union scared and hungry people who stared in silence.

Even newspapers directed at the German-Russians such as *Der Deutsche in Transnistrien* commented that

> only slowly was the oppression in every manner through Moscow's fist alleviated, and more than once did the German-Russians look around shyly and distrustfully when new orders and measures were promulgated which meant new freedom for them, and which they (the German-Russians) regarded in astonishment and disbelief.[13]

Such statements were openly published since the Germans found it advantageous to highlight the misery of the German-Russians and other Soviet peoples as evidence of the evils of communism.

Karl Götz, called the "poet of German destiny throughout the world," who was given the special mission to report on the condition of the *Volksdeutsche* in occupied Soviet territory stated in a published article that unlike other nationality groups, the German-Russians did not give the German soldiers a friendly reception. The German-Russians, Götz claimed, had changed from an open joyous people into an intimidated and mistrustful group, hollow-eyed and clad in rags.[14]

Although the Soviet government used the accusation that the German-Russian villages were filled with National Socialist sympathizers as an excuse for deporting the German-Russians from their home villages to Eastern parts of the Soviet Union, the German-Russians in reality were probably the group most isolated from the effects of National Socialist propaganda. Numerous German documents testify to the ignorance of the German-Russians concerning events in Germany or the outside world since the First World War. Many German-Russians actually feared the worst from the Germans, while others knowing nothing about the unique status of the *Volksdeutsche* had only the understandable expectation that the Germans might display some sympathy for people of German origin.

Many German documents tell of the great curiosity which the German-Russians showed about Germany and the outside world. One German report states that the German-Russians were quite glad to talk to German soldiers as it was one of their first opportunities to find out what was happening outside the Soviet Union. This report states that due to the strict control of all forms of information, the German-Russians had no conception of developments in either

[13] *Der Deutsche in Transnistren, "Der Führers befreiende Tat,"* 19 July 1942.

[14] T–81, R 529, DAI 862, "*Deutsche im Sowjetparadiese*" by Karl Götz, n.d., ft. 5296973.

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Europe or Germany since the end of World War I.[15] In a German report of 6 August 1941, it was stated that the German-Russians had not seen any pictures of Hitler that were not caricatures, or had any knowledge of present-day Germany.[16]

Since the German-Russians received only Soviet information about Germany and the rest of the world, many German-Russians believed in part what the Soviets said. A German report of 20 November 1941 to the *Forschungsstelle für das Russlanddeutschtum* (Research Centre for German-Russians) concerning the German-Russians in the villages surrounding Odessa stated that the Soviet propaganda had successfully sown doubts among the German-Russians concerning the National Socialists. Many German-Russians tended to doubt German statements concerning the achievements of the Third Reich, and even the German-Russian school-teachers doubted German reports on the accomplishments of the German government. Communist propaganda had made many German-Russians predisposed to regard Germany as a " robbers' nest." [17]

The German-Russians, the Germans believed, were propagandized into accepting the Soviet point of view on the Spanish Civil War and the war with Finland, and they regarded Hitler as a new type of Kaiser. Upon hearing from the Germans that all the peoples of Europe including the French were willingly fighting against the Russians, the German-Russians, it was reported, could only shake their heads in disbelief.[18]

Knowledge of Germany was so slight that even some German-speaking Jews in the Odessa region were under the impression that they might be considered *Volksdeutsche*. This attempt to be declared *Volksdeutsche* on the part of the Jews was reported by the Germans as another sneaky attempt on the part of the Jews to better their position.[19] However, there were probably honest grounds for confusion as the Germans lamented the assimilation of the German-Russians of Odessa into the local population.[20]

Dr. H. Stingl, a scholar on the German-Russians, wrote to another German-Russian scholar Eduard Krause of the *Forschungsstelle des Russlanddeutschtums* in defence of the German-Russians that, although the impression created by the German-Russians was quite depressing especially to Germans from the Reich, one had to account for all the difficulties faced by the German-Russians. Although it was certain,

[15] T–454, Records of the Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territory, R 17, EAP 99/42, ft. 000736.

[16] T–81, R 529, DAI 862, Letter of Ernest Rüssler, 6 Aug. 1941, ft. 5296888. Of course, all later pictures of Stalin presented to the German-Russians by the Germans were caricatures of a similar nature. See also T–81, R 382, DAI 173, ft. 5119677.

[17] T–81, R 633, DAI 1130, *Feldwebel* Welke to the *Forschungsstelle für das Russlanddeutschtum*, 20 October 1941, ft. 5434081.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] T-81, R 309, VoMi 818/3, Dr. Wolfrum, " *Das Schwarzmeer Deutschtum, Deutsche aus Transnistrien*," 1944, ft. 2438072.

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he said, that little, if any, German consciousness remained among the German-Russians, this was the fault of the Germans for not caring about these people before 1918 and for not being in a position to help them after 1918. The German-Russians, he stated, are a good example of what the " Asiatic fist " can do to a people.[21]

One group received their initial contact with the Germans as prisoners of war. Many German-Russians had served in the rear of Russian units as translators or labourers. A report to the DAI on 4 August 1941 marvels at the fact that although Volga Germans taken as prisoners of war spoke with an authentic Palatinate dialect and were perfect blond, blue-eyed specimens, they still lacked any consciousness that they belonged to the German people. Although these German-Russians ended up as prisoners of war, it was not because they willingly chose to support the German cause. Rather, the German-Russian prisoners of war declared they had heard that the Germans might cut their throats (*die Deutschen schnitten allen Gefangenen die Hälse ab*), but they were so hungry, sore, and exhausted that they decided to take a chance on the conditions as prisoners of war.[22] The report goes on to say that all the German-Russians knew of the German political system was that Germany was the land of " bloody fascism." The German-Russian prisoners of war stated that, concerning conditions in Germany, they were taught by political commissars that there was great unemployment in Germany and that a worker received only 200 grams of bread per week.[23]

The younger soldiers could state little about their heritage apart from a few remarks about the time of Catherine the Great. Older German-Russians who were familiar with German-Russian history and culture had refrained from taking too great an interest in these subjects under the communists, it was surmised, for fear of drawing the attention of the secret police.[24]

This report concerning German-Russian prisoners of war underlines the phrase that the German-Russians displayed no animosity towards the Jews, probably trying to emphasize how much they had lost their " German character " (*Judenfeindschaft scheint es nicht zu geben*).[25] Few Jews, however, lived in German-Russian villages.

Further proof that the German-Russian villages were not infested with German agents lies in the fact that not only did the German-Russians know little about conditions in Germany, but that the Germans in turn knew little about conditions among the German-Russians. While the German-Russians were kept ignorant of conditions

[21] T–81, R 628, DAI 998, Dr. H. Stingl to Ed. Krause of the *Forschungsstelle des Russlanddeutschtums*, 17 March 1942, ft. 5426040.

[22] T–81, R 382, DAI 173, Report of *Feldwebel* O. Hartung to the DAI, 4 August 1941, ft. 5119676.

[23] T–81, R 551, DAI 924, " *Wolgadeutsche, in deutsche Gefangenschaft geraten, sagen aus*," 4 August 1941, ft. 5326051.

[24] Ibid., 5119677.

[25] Ibid.

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in Germany and the world, the world was kept ignorant about the true condition of the German-Russians. Although there were numerous organizations in Germany concerned with the fate of the German-Russians such as the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle,* the "*Verband der Deutschen aus Russland,*" the "*Deutsches Ausland-Institut*" the "*Deutsche Akademie*" in Munich and the "*Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland*" they could only conjecture on the fate of the German-Russians.[26]

The "*Forschungsstelle für das Russlanddeutschtum*" declared in an unpublished memorandum that it had no personal connections with German-Russians living in the Soviet Union and that it had to derive information from other sources.[27] What little knowledge the Germans did have of the German-Russians was obtained from travellers to the Soviet Union or immigrants. Occasionally information could be obtained from the correspondence of a few German-Russians who still wrote to relatives living outside the Soviet Union. The "*Verein der Kaukasusdeutschen*" (Union of German-Russians from the Caucasus), centred in Germany, made concerted efforts to prove through excerpts from such letters and reports of travellers that the German-Russians were not Bolshevized and still maintained their German character. This was necessary, it was declared, since many doubts were circulating in official circles concerning the value of the German-Russians to Germandom.[28]

In an unpublished report labelled as "strictly confidential" (*streng vertraulich*) in which all names and places were left blank for the security of those involved, a German who had the opportunity to query three German-Russians living in the Soviet Union reported on the results of his interviews. The questions he asked were: 1. Do the German-Russian villages still exist? 2. Have they maintained their German character? 3. Do the people still speak German? 4. Are the German-Russians communists? and 5. Would the German-Russians resettle if the proposal was made? [29]

The German informer was told that despite famines and deportations, many of the villages were still intact, that German was still exclusively spoken, and that there were practically no German-Russian communists.[30] The state of the German-Russians described in this report was somewhat better from a German point of view than the situation the Germans actually encountered upon entering Soviet territory, but what is more interesting is the fact that the Germans were relying on the verbal statements of three people in their attempts

[26] T–81, R 561, DAI 950, ft. 5337312.
[27] T–81, R 577, DAI 1075, "*Stand der Russlanddeutschen Forschung,*" 3 June 1939, ft. 5358617.
[28] T–81, R 294, Vo Mi 504, Report of the *Verein der Kaukasusdeutschen,* 12 December 1939, ft. 2419482.
[29] T–81, R 321, Vo Mi 951, "*Bericht über die Unterredung mit Russlanddeutschen von jenseits des Dnjeper,*" n.d., ft. 2452016.
[30] Ibid.

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to answer the most basic questions about the condition of the German-Russians. This report indicates that the Germans were prevented from performing any reliable research on the current status of the German-Russians.

A number of scholars such as Dr. Karl Stumpp, Dr. Georg Leibbrandt, Dr. Benjamin Unruh, Karl Götz and others before World War II could produce no more than conjectures concerning the fate of the German-Russians.[31] After the German invasion Karl Götz was given the special mission of reporting on the condition of the German-Russians in occupied Soviet territory. These reports, it was stated, were eagerly awaited as there had been no certain information on the fate of the German-Russians for a long time.[32]

Prior to the war many Germans were led to assume that all vestiges of German-Russian life had been obliterated, or that German-Russian customs were maintained by only a small percentage of older people while the younger people were all Russified and indoctrinated with communist ideology.[33]

Although the Germans depended on the ethnic German populations in such countries as Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Norway to aid the Germans in their seizure of power, reports written in 1940 state that the Germans regarded the German-Russians as unreliable and infested with Bolshevism.[34]

In August 1941, a German communiqué declared that Hitler still did not know what role the German-Russians were to play in the new order and that this would be determined after an investigation had been made to see how much the German-Russians had been influenced by the communists.[35]

The Germans, upon entering the Soviet Union, discovered to their surprise that many of the approximately 300,000 German-Russians who came under Axis control had still preserved their German language and were still living in villages with a German character.[36]

Within the German-Russian communities there were neither planned acts of sabotage by German-Russian agents nor uprisings of the German-Russian population to join in the German cause. Further proof that the Germans did not maintain a network of "tens of thousands of diversionists and spies" in the German-Russian communities is the fact that the German agencies concerned with the German-Russians had no reliable information concerning the present status of the German-Russian communities and were not even sure if they still existed or were in the same location.

Upon the entry of German troops the German-Russians did not

[31] T–81, R 561, DAI 950, ft. 5337312.
[32] Karl Götz, T–81, R 529, DAI 862, ft. 5296973.
[33] T–81, R 561, DAI 950, ft. 5337312/13.
[34] T–81, R 529, DAI 861. "*An den Verein der Kaukasusdeutschen*," 12 February 1940, ft. 5246496.
[35] T–81, R 551, DAI 924, excerpt from *Dagens Nyheter*, 4 August 1941, ft. 5326206.
[36] T–81, R 561, DAI 950, ft. 5337312/13.

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display great enthusiasm for the German cause. The joy expressed by certain German-Russians at the entry of German troops was not based on any prior commitment to National Socialism but rather was due to the facts that the German-Russians were grateful at being saved from deportation, happy that the fighting had ended, and hopeful that the Germans would change disliked aspects of the communist system. The German-Russians for reasons connected with the hardships and suffering experienced under Soviet rule did hope, along with other peoples of the Soviet Union, that the German invaders would alleviate their grievances and provide them with a better future.

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# The Russian Annexation of the Königsberg Area 1941-45

Tony Sharp

## The Diplomatic Process

DURING the visit to Moscow of British Foreign Minister Eden in December 1941, Stalin opened up the whole question of post-war frontiers. Regarding East Prussia, Stalin demanded that "the portion of Germany containing Tilsit and to the north of the Niemen river should be added to the Lithuanian Republic of the USSR." The remainder of East Prussia was to go to Poland as part of her compensation for the proposed loss of her territories east of the Curzon Line to Russia.[1]

For nearly two years this proposal regarding the Königsberg area seems to have vanished into diplomatic oblivion. Nobody mentioned it to the Poles, and during this period even the Russians, when they talked of compensation proposals to their allies, made no reference to it. It appeared to be assumed by all that Poland would be compensated with the whole of East Prussia. It was to emerge again at Teheran.

On 1 December 1943, Churchill proposed to Roosevelt and Stalin "in principle" that "the home of the Polish State and nation should be between the so-called Curzon Line and the line of the Oder, including for Poland East Prussia and Oppeln." The accounts of Stalin's answer vary. According to Churchill, he said that the Russians wanted Königsberg, and "he sketched a possible line on the map."[2] If he obtained this "he would be ready enough to agree to my formula about Poland." The similar Soviet account renders Stalin's answer as:

> The Russians have no ice-free ports on the Baltic. That is why the Russians would need the ice-free ports of Königsberg and Memel[3] and the corresponding part of the territory of Eastern Prussia. . . . If the British agree to transfer of the said territory to us, we shall agree to the formula proposed by Churchill.

The American account is far more detailed on the part of East Prussia sought by the Russians, but implies that this was proposed as a quid pro quo to Soviet acceptance of the Curzon Line, not the "formula as a whole." Thus if Russia "would be given the northern part of East Prussia, running along the left bank of the Niemen and include Tilsit

[1] See Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, Vol. II (London, 1971), pp. 222–23.

[2] Stalin's "line" is sketched on the map in *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers* (hereafter *FRUS*), *The Conferences at Cairo and Teheran 1943* (Washington, 1961), facing p. 601.

[3] The Russians agreed to German annexation of the Memelland including the port of Memel from Lithuania in the Secret Additional Protocol to the German-Soviet Boundary and Friendship Treaty on 28 September 1939.

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and the City of Königsberg," Stalin was "prepared to accept the Curzon Line as the frontier between the Soviet Union and Poland." [4]

This was how the issue was left suspended—as Churchill wished—while Eden in the first instance (while Churchill convalesced in North Africa), and then Churchill himself, attempted to obtain the agreement of the Polish government in exile. To assist the deliberations, Stalin sent a map marked by himself to Churchill, via Beneš the President of the exiled government of Czechoslovakia. Verbal accounts of this map (by Churchill, Harriman and Raczynski) show that Stalin claimed the Curzon Line and Königsberg and indicate that he would have settled for a frontier on the Oder, possibly extended to the *eastern* Neisse, and leave Stettin in Germany. Since Stalin had also obtained Roosevelt's private agreement on future Polish frontiers at Teheran, he could hardly be blamed if he thought that he had laid the basis for a "Great Power" agreement upon the issue.[5]

While he gave the British time to work on the Polish government in exile, his own organization, the "Union of Polish Patriots" made no reference to—and perhaps did not know of—the "loss" by Poland of part of East Prussia; the whole territory was claimed.[6] Conversely the British did not mention it either to "their" Poles.

This policy had been initiated by Eden. On 22 December 1943 he informed Churchill that he was not mentioning the Soviet demand for Königsberg to the Poles, since he hoped that if the Poles accepted the Curzon Line, the British could prevail upon the Soviets to drop this demand, which the Foreign Office considered "would take most of the gilt off the East Prussian gingerbread for Poland." Eden continually maintained that Britain should not go out of its way to support this "spurious" claim, and appears to have been encouraged by Beneš to believe that there was "room for bargaining" on Königsberg.

The British War Cabinet agreed on 25 January 1944 that there were no grounds "on which decisive objections could be raised to the Russian absorption of Königsberg." Three days later Churchill informed Stalin that in detailing to the Poles the compensation they would receive, he did not mention "the point about Königsberg." Stalin made it clear in his reply of 4 February that this had not been a gambit. Unless the Soviet "minimum claim" of the north-eastern part of East Prussia, including Königsberg was met, "the Soviet Union's concession

[4] See W. S. Churchill, *The Second World War: Volume V: Closing the Ring* (London, 1952), pp. 356–57; *The Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam Conferences: Documents* (hereafter *TYP*) (Moscow, 1969), p. 50; *FRUS, Cairo and Teheran*, pp. 601–604, 847. See also Woodward, op. cit. p. 651.

[5] See *FRUS 1943* Vol. III (Washington, 1965), p. 731; General Sikorski Historical Institute ed., *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations 1939–1945* (hereafter *DPSR*), Vol. II (London, 1968), pp. 156–57; *FRUS, Cairo and Teheran*, p. 594.

[6] See for example the statements in "*Wolna Polska*" (Free Poland) cited in Gotthold Rhode and Wolfgang Wagner eds., *The Genesis of the Oder-Neisse Line in the Diplomatic Negotiations during World War II; Sources and Documents* (Stuttgart, 1959), pp. 76–79.

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in recognising the Curzon Line becomes entirely pointless, as I told you in Teheran." [7]

It was clear that the Königsberg area was important to Stalin. To the British it was of no importance. Stalin could have it. The Poles were informed that they could not have it on 6 February. Thereafter British compensation proposals noted that the Königsberg area was not to be included in Polish claims.

The British even got down to the details of a dividing line between the Polish and Soviet spheres in East Prussia. A Foreign Office paper suggested a line drawn from the southern boundary of Gumbinnen to the coast, just south-west of Königsberg, or an addition to this of the corner of Allenstein east of the lakes. An even better line, from the point of view of the lesser number of Germans to be expelled, ran from south-west of Königsberg to the northern tip of Suwalki. On 5 May a Post-Hostilities Planning Staff paper considered that the Soviet Union would require sufficient hinterland to give it uninterrupted overland communications to the port of Königsberg, and would thus probably claim the north-eastern *Kreis* of *Regierungsbezirk* Königsberg and the northern *Kreis* of *Regierungsbezirk* Gumbinnen.[8]

Roosevelt informed the Russians on 3 June that his attitude had not changed since his Teheran deal. On 12 June he told the visiting Mikolajczyk, the Prime Minister of the exiled Polish government, that he was " not worried about territorial matters " and he thought that what the Poles would get and lose was " a pretty fair exchange." He thought that Poland " should get East Prussia," and did not think that Stalin's claim to Königsberg " should be regarded as final." Roosevelt " might ultimately persuade him to drop it." Roosevelt's " knowledge " of Stalin's intentions came from Oskar Lange who had visited Stalin as an " unofficial ambassador " on the Polish question in April and May, and had reported to the American embassy in Moscow. He later met Mikolajczyk, who recorded that " Stalin mentioned that he wished to keep Krolewiec (Königsberg) with Russia but, in Lange's view, Stalin had not stated this in a definite way." If Stalin had left any doubts, he removed them from Mikolajczyk's mind when he met him in Moscow on 3 August. The official Polish minutes give him to say " Krolewiec (Königsberg) . . . (after a moment of reflection . . .) and the Krolewiec area will be assigned to Russia . . . Yes, to Russia." There was to be no further dispute on the matter, until the slight contretemps at Potsdam. The Yalta Communiqué did not specify the fact that Russia was to have the Königsberg area, but it was clearly understood throughout the negotiations. In their post-Yalta reports both Churchill and Roosevelt

[7] Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London, 1962), pp. 255n and 282n; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, *Stalin's Correspondence with Churchill and Attlee 1941–1945* (hereafter *SCCA*) (New York, 1965), pp. 193 and 196.

[8] PHP (44) 10. On the Post-Hostilities Planning Staff, see Tony Sharp, *The Wartime Alliance and the Zonal Division of Germany* (Oxford, 1975), p. 35n.

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made it plain that Poland would not obtain all of East Prussia. The preparatory papers for the Potsdam Conference maintained this position.[9]

But there also existed the practical problem on the ground—how far the new Polish administration was to be permitted to extend into East Prussia. A statement by the President of the Provisional Polish Government on 5 February 1945 indicates that the dividing line had by then already been agreed in principle but not settled in detail. On 17 June the Foreign Office noted that a provisional frontier had been established 30–40 kilometres to the south of the Königsberg-Insterburg-Gumbinnen railway. The proposal made by the Russians to the Potsdam Conference on 22 July was perfectly consistent with this demarcation (and also with Stalin's Teheran map).[10]

This proposal was considered by the Conference on 23 July. Stalin noted that at Teheran, he had complained that because of the Baltic freeze, the Soviet Union needed " at least one ice-free port at the expense of Germany." Neither Roosevelt nor Churchill " had raised any objections and this question had been agreed upon by the three of them." The Russians " were anxious to see this agreement approved " at Potsdam.

Truman and Churchill agreed in principle. The " only question which arose was that of the legal occasion to transfer." The Soviet draft would require them to admit that "East Prussia did not exist " and that the Königsberg area " was not under the authority of the Allied Control Council in Germany." They would also be committed to recognize the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union, and " all these matters really belonged to the final peace settlement." Stalin was satisfied that the two governments supported the Soviet proposal in principle. Churchill concluded the discussion by stating that it would be necessary to redraft in part the Soviet proposal, and he recommended that more general terms be used in the Conference Communiqué. Stalin, according to the Soviet minutes, did not object to this.[11]

On the morning of 1 August, at their final meeting, the three Foreign Ministers considered the original Soviet proposal, elaborated by one British draft (agreed to by the Americans) and two Russian drafts.[12]

In the protocol subcommittee, the Russian representative had objected, said Byrnes, the American Secretary of State, " to certain qualifying words which make it clear that the arrangement is provisional and subject to the peace settlement." Byrnes was insistent that they should not use language which implied that they intended " an immediate

[9] See *FRUS 1944*, Vol. III (Washington, 1965), p. 1281; Jan Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory* (London, 1948), pp. 320–21; S. Mikolajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination* (London, 1948), p. 66; *DPSR*, Vol. II, pp. 259, 316; *FRUS, The Conferences at Malta and Yalta 1945* (Washington, 1955), pp. 189, 282–84, 509–10, 792, 869, 974; Rhode and Wagner, op. cit. p. 215; *FRUS, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) 1945* (in two volumes), Vol. I (Washington, 1960), pp. 742, 778–81.

[10] See Rhode and Wagner, op. cit. p. 201.

[11] See ibid pp. 186–87; *TYP*, pp. 234–35; *FRUS Potsdam*, Vol. II, pp. 305–06, 314.

[12] Texts in ibid pp. 1597–99.

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transfer of territory." The Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov agreed, but then argued against certain phrases in the British draft. The British Foreign Secretary Bevin said that this draft expressed Churchill's ideas clearly and he wanted "to keep as close to the undertakings given by Churchill as possible." Most of the difficulties were ironed out. However Molotov then objected to that part of the British draft which stated that the transfer of the Königsberg area be "subject to expert examination." This he wanted deleted, although he agreed with Bevin that "during all history boundaries had been determined in such a manner." When Byrnes asked, why he was then objecting, he made no answer.

That evening, at the final plenary session, Stalin asked for the offending phrase to be replaced by the words "exact line on ground should be established by experts of the USSR and Poland." Bevin refused to leave the British out of this matter, since in his view it concerned the allies as a whole. Stalin replied that the question concerned the frontiers of Poland and the USSR, to which Bevin retorted that the frontier had to be recognized by them all. The West had agreed to support the line at the peace conference, but it was too much for them to accept a line established solely by the Poles and Russians. Stalin maintained that the general line of the frontier would be determined by the peace conference, but it was the question of the frontier on the ground, which would mean only a variation of a kilometre or so. The British considered that the ultimate transfer was being anticipated by the proposal, and wanted to have a commission of experts appointed by the peace conference. Byrnes also supported the original wording. If the two countries concerned agreed, there would be no need to appoint experts. If there was disagreement the line could be settled only by experts appointed either by the Council of Foreign Ministers or the peace conference. Stalin then agreed to the original wording, while noting that it did not detail the form of this expert examination.[13]

The final protocol of the Conference, signed that night, provided for the following agreement on the "City of Koenigsberg and the Adjacent Area":

> The Conference examined a proposal by the Soviet Government to the effect that pending the final determination of territorial questions at the peace settlement, the section of the western frontier of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which is adjacent to the Baltic Sea should pass from a point on the eastern shore of the Bay of Danzig to the east, north of Braunsberg-Goldap, to the meeting point of the frontiers of Lithuania, the Polish Republic and East Prussia. The Conference has agreed in principle to the proposal of the Soviet Government concerning the ultimate transfer to the Soviet Union of the City of Koenigsberg and the area adjacent to it as described above subject to expert examination of the actual frontier. The President of the United States and the

[13] See ibid pp. 551–53, 588–89, 598; *TYP*, pp. 309–10.

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British Prime Minister have declared that they will support the proposal of the Conference at the forthcoming peace settlement.[14]

The final act, if we can believe Mikolajczyk's highly unreliable account, was played in Moscow on 16 August. A Polish delegation had been summoned there to discuss reparations. Shortly after these discussions Molotov informed Mikolajczyk that they "must do something about frontiers," and go through the "formality" of approving "the line across East Prussia . . . agreed to and signed on July 25 1944" by Osobka-Morawski, then head of the Polish Committee for National Liberation and now Polish Prime Minister.[15]

Molotov then produced the signed agreement and a map which showed that Osobka-Morawski had given to the Russians more territory in East Prussia than allocated by Potsdam. Mikolajczyk insisted upon seeing Stalin. Molotov tried conciliation. He granted the Poles permission to route their shipping from the Polish port of Elbing to the channel leading into the gulf of Danzig. This channel situated some 30 miles from Königsberg constituted the only outlet for such ports as the Poles still held in that bottle-necked region. But Stalin refused this concession, since he did not wish to "have foreign spies spying on Königsberg," where he had "established a military sea-base."[16]

As a result, either the July agreement was re-signed or a new agreement was made. The text of this was fully consistent with the Potsdam Agreement.[17] Since this had been based upon a Soviet proposal, it seems strange that it had not been made consistent with the July agreement. If Mikolajczyk was correct about differences existing between the July 1944 and Potsdam agreements, then the Russians *ceded* East Prussian territory to the Poles under the Moscow agreement. In any case the issue was settled.

## Russian Justifications

THE uniqueness of the Russian annexation must be noted. The Russians neither referred to "historic frontiers," as in the case of most of eastern Poland and Bessarabia, nor did they refer to ethnic principles, as in the case of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia and to a lesser extent Galicia, in order to justify their absorption of the Königsberg area. Stalin's nearest attempt was to refer to the area as "age-old Slav lands."[18]

The Russians never attempted historic and/or ethnic rationalisation, because they could not. The Russians annexed territory that had never been part of tsarist Russia and whose population was not akin to any of the peoples of the USSR. Here it can also be pointed out that although

[14] *FRUS Potsdam*, Vol. II, p. 1489. The Russian text omits the word "ultimate." See *TYP*, p. 327.

[15] Other evidence supports that fact that some agreement on frontiers was signed on this day. See Rhode and Wagner, op. cit. pp. 126, 375.

[16] Mikolajczyk, op. cit. pp. 159–60.

[17] See *DPSR*, Vol. II, pp. 662–63.

[18] *TYP*, p. 50.

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in 1941 Stalin suggested that this area be part of the Lithuanian SSR, it became instead an *oblast*, of the Russian SFSR, and the expelled population was replaced by Greater Russians.[19] It may be that the idea of a Greater Russian outpost to the south and west of the former Baltic States and Belorussia, during the period of post-war "pacification,' appealed to Stalin's Great Russian chauvinism and provided a justification for the annexation based upon internal security grounds.

Since it was an act of pure annexation in the Great Power tradition, Stalin's stated reasons were consonant with this. He argued upon the basis of security and revenge against the recent aggressor Germany, and general commercial advantage.

In security terms, Stalin argued that annexation would "put Russia on the neck of Germany."[20] It may also be that he considered Königsberg could become more important as a Russian naval base.

From the point of view of revenge, his action fitted in with the dismantling and reparations policy which the Russians applied to Germany. "The Russians had suffered and lost so much blood," said Stalin at Potsdam, "they were anxious to have some small satisfaction to [*sic*] tens of millions of their inhabitants who had suffered in this war." He emphasized continually the "reasonableness" of his action. It was "the only German territory claimed by us." Russia was only having "a bite at Germany" and surely "a small piece of German territory . . . was deserved."[21]

This reasoning was accompanied by constant suggestion that Königsberg would fulfil Russia's need for an ice-free port. There were two schools of thought in the West regarding this. George Kennan argued that by incorporating the Baltic states, Russia obtained three substantially ice-free ports (Windau, Libau and Baltic Port). Königsberg was 49 kilometres inland at the end of an artificial canal taking low-draft vessels only, which froze several months of the year. Therefore the USSR was neither short of ice-free ports, nor would Königsberg fulfil this need if it were.

The British Foreign Office took another view. They noted that the Baltic ports were "in every respect inferior" to Königsberg with regard to port facilities, and the latter had a far greater turnover of shipping. In economic terms, Königsberg had "exceptionally good" rail and river communications with Belorussia and the whole north-west of the Ukraine. Before 1914, three-quarters of the goods exported from this port had been of Russian origin, and it remained the natural port of exit for Belorussian and Ukrainian products.[22] Perhaps this was the most important reason why the annexation of East Prussia had been a Russian aim in the First World War—and in the Second.

[19] Cf. V. Stanley Vardys, "How the Baltic Republics Fare in the Soviet Union" (*Foreign Affairs*, 1966, Vol. 44, No. 3, p. 513).
[20] Churchill, op. cit. p. 357.
[21] *FRUS, Potsdam*, Vol. II, p. 305; *SCCA*, p. 604; *FRUS, Cairo and Teheran*, p. 604.
[22] George F. Kennan, *Memoirs 1925–50* (London, 1967), p. 264.

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# Document: Poland

## Confessions of an SS General

*THE excerpts below are from a book published by P.I.W. in Warsaw in 1977. The author, Kazimierz Moczarski, a prominent anti-Nazi resistance figure, was imprisoned by the communists after the war and during the Stalinist era he was being prepared for a show trial. He was subjected for two years to physical tortures, sentenced to death and locked in a cell with two German war criminals. One of them was the SS Gruppenführer, General Jürgen Stroop, the infamous destroyer of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943. After 10 years in prison, Moczarski was rehabilitated following a re-trial in December 1956. He died in 1975. The book tells the story of the author's "Conversations with an Executioner" over a period of nine months when they were held together in one cell.*

*The book, published in 20,000 copies, sold out within a couple of days.*

**The Destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto**

At the beginning of September 1949 after six months of co-habitation, we began to talk in greater detail about all aspects of the Jewish question and the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto. We were still the three of us, Stroop, Schielke and myself. By now we knew one another fairly well and talked freely and confidently on many subjects, sometimes in hushed tones. Although we differed so much we nevertheless respected the prisoner's right to secrecy.

Stroop knew that the Poles were in possession of his extensive report on the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto and appreciated the value of this document to them. He was not keen to elaborate on his participation in the "solution" of the Jewish problem and was sometimes diffident about broaching the main aspects of the question. Yet, at the same time, he could not resist the temptation to talk about it.

I suppose he must have felt the need to spill out (prison chewings-over, we used to describe them), the pains, the doubts, the depressions —all the bitterness and burden of "confidential" matters, and real or imagined secrets. We used to help him to spill it out. Schielke, I believe, simply out of curiosity and to combat prison boredom; I, for the reasons already explained in the first chapter, to "extract as great a degree of truth about Stroop and his life," that is, out of interest.

The circumstances of our talks on Jewish matters varied. Often Stroop began himself. Sometimes we egged him on. Sometimes the discussions had a mild philosophical character, at other times everything was tense, quarrelsome, growling. We then fired unexpected questions at him, as if we were police investigators, but this happened seldom.

It would be impossible in the chapters devoted to the *Grossaktion* in Warsaw to convey all the polemical ploys, digressions and cut and thrust of those talks. It would put the reader at one remove from the main thread of the story which is that Jurgen Stroop's "action" in April and May 1943 killed off 71,000 Polish Jews and turned a whole

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district of my town into a rubble-strewn desert. I am, therefore, quoting Stroop's words, reordered according to the chronological order of events, but in no way embellished.

" At the sound of the telephone I jumped up," recounted Stroop. " It happened this way. On 15 April 1943 I returned in the late afternoon to Lvov from some business trip in my district. Immediately the duty officer from General Katzmann's staff rushed to me with the news that I had been telephoned several times from Berlin and that I must await further instructions in my quarters."

" I expected a cyphered telex message or else a telephone call from Heinrich Himmler's staff. I often received such sudden instructions or information. While waiting for the call I took a bath and stretched out on the sofa reading a secret document containing practical conclusions of some scientific work on the Jewish question. Trying to read it made me fall asleep. I was dog-tired at that time, as I was trying as best I could to assist General Katzmann. We were of equal rank in the SS and in the police, but he was my superior. Katzmann had been at first the SS and police commander in Radom, then, for the past two years, he had been in Lvov. In Galicia he was showing himself to be efficient and enterprising. Katzmann was a good general and a charming colleague. During the summer of 1943 Heinrich Himmler nominated him to the highly regarded post of SS and police commander in the Pomeranian area, promoting him at the same time to the rank of *SS-Gruppenführer.*"

To my observation that this " good " general was indeed very good and possibly one of the best perpetrators of genocide, Stroop, after some exchanges, finally admitted: " Fritz Katzmann, over two years, deported from Galicia about 550,000 Jews." (This was up to 1943).

When Stroop used such expressions as " deportation," " *Sonderbehandlung,*" " the solution to the problem " or " fishing out " of the Jews, those phrases had for us one meaning, and one meaning only.

" I became '*kommandiert zum SS und Polizeiführer Galizien-Lemberg*' in February 1943," said Stroop. " That is, already after the liquidation of a number of Jewish centres—amongst others those in Stryj, Rava Ruska, Czortkov, Tarnopol, Stanislavov and Brzezany."

Here I enquired whether he meant the Brzezany in which he, 20 years younger and a non-commissioned officer in the Kaiser's Army, had fallen in love with a teenaged Polish girl? He confirmed this and added that in March 1943 he had gone to Brzezany and tried to locate the house in which he had been billeted during the First World War.

" When I arrived in Lvov," he continued, " the Ghetto there had already ceased to exist. Katzmann disbanded it finally in January 1943. I turned up, as you say, ' during the follow-up, after the production '. We were tidying up the situation after some heavy encounters."

It appeared from what he was saying that, during his 10-week stay in Lvov, thousands of Jews left over after the main Katzmann strikes, in hiding or gathered in work camps, were being liquidated.

These camps had been set up much earlier, in different places and for different reasons. The physically strongest Jews were employed for the building of the D-4 motorway. Conditions in the camps were inhuman and the work beyond the endurance of the average person.

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For instance, when transport was lacking, the prisoners were made to carry heavy loads of rock on their backs over long distances. The rock had been chipped off with primitive tools and few were capable of such endurance. Numbers dwindled rapidly as a result of death from exhaustion, execution and, sometimes, escape. Katzmann, therefore, regularly supplied new Jewish prisoners to enable the completion of the plans set up earlier by General Prützmann and Jürgen Stroop and, later, by his successor, for the construction of the D-4.

After the destruction of the Ghetto in Lvov there were, according to Stroop, 25 such camps throughout Galicia, holding about 1,000 persons each. It emerged from the discussions between Stroop and Schielke, who remembered many statistics from Bierkamp's office in Krakow, that the SS *Hauptamt* received 5 zlotys per Jewish prisoner per day. Out of that Katzmann paid out to the camps 1·60 zloty per "registered Jewish head." This was all the camp commander had to pay out for the upkeep of prisoners who were paid nothing for the work they did. Apart from the "symbolic bowl of soup" they received absolutely nothing and, as long as it was possible, they tried to organize some kind of feeding amongst themselves.

As Schielke calculated, the SS received monthly, for the work done by the Jews in the 25 Galician camps, close to 4,000,000 zlotys. Stroop did not deny Schielke's estimates, who concluded his reasoning by remarking: "It was a juicy business for Himmler's headquarters. Having organized the commerical exploitation of the unpaid work of millions of people the camp's administration could transfer to their accounts billions of Reichsmarks. The SS was a major economic power in the Third Reich."!

Stroop was, as he said, in favour of maintaining the "Julag" in Galicia. Jewish prisoners built, as he once disclosed, about 100 kilometres of the most difficult parts of the D-4 motorway, those passing through rocky and marshy ground.

"As long as I was in Lvov," stated Stroop, "the Jewish workers were content and Heinrich Himmler was postponing the projected liquidation of the camps. The *SS-Reichsführer* agreed with the arguments of General Prützmann and accepted my suggestion to give priority to the efficient construction of the motorway."

"Following the partially unsuccessful liquidation of the ghettos in Galician towns and villages, the Jews on the run caused Katzmann many headaches. Many of them hid in the forests, where they joined forces with the Polish partisans. They had plenty of arms. They used to acquire them from our former allies, the Italians and the Hungarians. They caused us a lot of harm. The terrain was difficult to fight in—hills and mountains, forest and brush. The Polish intelligentsia and the townsmen and also the Catholic clergy gave the Jews effective help. The peasants let them use barns, cellars and haystacks. Even Ukrainian peasants sometimes helped the Jews, although as a rule the *Halyczyna* (he used the Ukrainian word) cooperated with us in the liquidation of the Jews and were not too kind to the Poles, either. There was constant disorder in that district! And always a threat."

"Once I went to Rava Ruska, to visit the headquarters of our troops fighting the Polish-Jewish bands in the area. The commanding

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*SS-Sturmbannführer* explained the position. It was a difficult one and I came to the conclusion that our forces were too small to deal with such a cunning and determined enemy. On my way back to Lvov Jews from a nearby forest shot at my car."

"I drew, from the situation in Galicia at that time, the following conclusions. The first phase of eliminating Jews is fairly easy. One simply bags them like chickens. The passive masses not only go meekly along, but they also paralyse the active elements. These active Jews, even if they are organized, can't cope with this frightened, hysterical crowd. They don't control the situation and often they themselves perish with it. On the other hand the second phase is very difficult. The fugitives are people who are determined, courageous, strong and imaginative. They put up fierce resistance. They have good equipment and previously prepared paths for attacking and retreating—often ingenious ones."

"In addition I learned another lesson in Lvov," recalled Stroop. "I discovered that the Jews can be excellent engineers. I have examined in Rohatyn, in Zloczov and also in one of the forests which was a partisan base, the methods they used for building bunkers, defence positions, stores, their communication systems and so forth. You would never believe how marvellous they were. Shelters, canals, corridors, shafts, store-rooms, ammunition dumps, closets and hiding places, as well as labyrinths to lead one astray. How inventive were the ventilation and heating installations! In Rohatyn I saw an underground shelter which would take 60 people. It was 30 metres long and built deep underground with timber props, concrete pillars and steel rails. Over the roof there were two metres of earth and rubble and on the top, turf and flower beds. Among the innocent-looking shrubs were ventilation shafts. It took several days for Katzmann's SS men to take the place. The resistance of the Jewish defenders was ferocious. One did not know how to approach such a fortress. The first opening found was a metal door serving as a decoy. When our boys blew it up they found a corridor. Once in, there was an explosion and several SS men were heavily wounded. One of them fell into a hidden hole and was impaled."

"We had to seek other openings. Some of the Jews were killed; none of them surrendered. Most fled through secret underground passages which we found only several days afterwards. Later it transpired that they had used some medieval corridors used by the population in the past to escape invading Tartars. This limited group of Jews, this elite of the Zionist (Stroop often used this adjective) intelligentsia should never be underestimated. Their leadership is always determined, inventive, intelligent and strong."

I HAD guessed long before this point in the story that the posting of Stroop for two and a half months into the difficult region of Galicia was aimed at preparing him for the *Grossaktion* in Warsaw, planned by Himmler for the second part of April 1943. Within Katzmann's orchestra he perfected, as deputy to the conductor, his anti-Jewish experience and practised for his forthcoming experience in Warsaw.

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From many remarks made by Stroop in Mokotov jail I should like to single out two.

The first concerns the pogroms. In reply to a loose remark of mine about the Jews who escaped the pogroms of 1942–43 and hid in the Galician forests Stroop declared:

"We never organized pogroms. These were the doings of barbarians."

"You may be partly right," I said. "The pogroms of old were improvised, they had an element of communal madness, although they were sometimes consciously triggered off. Your actions were coldly calculated, planned in detail, backed up by your ideology of 'Aryan' superiority and implemented by stages, wholesale, in every sector."

Stroop's second remark was connected with his views on the "geopolitical" necessity for a quick solution to the Jewish question in Galicia.

"In the situation prevailing at that time, both during the war and in the expected post-war period, Galicia was an important area with considerable political and nationality problems but rich in mining resources, with good agricultural land, numerous towns, villages and hamlets inhabited haphazardly by three main groups—Poles, Ukrainians and Jews. There were also some Gypsies, Armenians, Ruthenians, Carpathian highlanders, Moldavians, Hungarians and Austrians—all contributing to create considerable cultural, economic and linguistic difficulties. Yet the Lvov district could be made uniform and peaceful in the Europe of the new *Ordnung*. It was a natural starting-point for communications between Western and Central Europe and Southern Russia, the Ukraine and Rumania." (In Nazi minds this recalled the route, north of the Carpathians, supposedly taken by the ancient Goths.) "Communications could go even farther, to the Crimea, the Black Sea and the Caucasus. We had, therefore, to arrange that this nationality triangle where two sides—in this case the Jews and the Poles—could combine against us, should be turned into a twosome. We wanted to have only Ukrainians and Poles. In the absence of the third party, we could always play the Ukrainians against the Poles and keep things under relative control."

"*Herr General*, that is all very well from the point of view of the technique of government, but isn't it true that Himmler, as far back as September 1939 had ordered, for basic ideological and National Socialist reasons, the 'solution of the Jewish problem,' which meant gradually, by stages, but with the use of ALL available means and methods?"

"Suddenly the phone rang. I jumped up," said Stroop reverting to the starting-point of his story. "I heard an officer who was checking my identity. Then I heard the voice of Heinrich Himmler himself and I knew it was something important. The *SS-Reichsführer* gave his orders concisely, in a military manner. I should go next morning to Krakow, to the superior commander of the SS and police for the East, *SS-Obergruppenführer* and Police General Friedrich Krüger, to consult him before a further trip to Warsaw. I tried to delay my journey by two days but Heinrich Himmler replied: 'My dear Stroop, all matters, even important ones, pale into insignificance before the

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task I have assigned for you in Warsaw. The time for the Great Action has come. Go to see Krüger and on 17 April you must present yourself DISCREETLY in Warsaw. From Krakov you will put in a confidential call to Hahn and he will give you the address of your quarters.' In addition Heinrich Himmler initiated me into the personal background of the Warsaw SS leadership and gave me far-reaching powers."

"Next day I had a conference with Krüger and, later on, with experts on his staff. Krüger was a clever guy, forward-looking, extremely well-informed, cautious and tough. He had the confidence both of Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler. He was formerly in charge of the smuggling of arms for the NSDAP before we took power, an expert in street fighting and in charge of SS training in the Munich area."

"Krüger and Hans Frank were certainly not in sympathy. The rivalry and duplication of the offices of Frank's administration and the outposts of the SS, the *Waffen-SS* and the police, were visible. Krüger was under Frank, but in practice he was autonomous. Certain things he did in conjunction with Frank—and others against him—in a way that might have been formally loyal but was easy to spot."

"What did *Höhere SS-und Polizeiführer Ost*, Friedrich Krüger, tell you in Krakow?" I asked. Stroop had been talking slowly, occasionally interrupting his story and I was eager to hear the whole thing.

"That Heinrich Himmler had given orders that I should go immediately to Warsaw and check on the deportation of the Jews from the Ghetto, in spite of the fact that von Sammern-Frankenegg was the local commander of the SS and the police. Von Sammern ranked lower than me (he was *SS-Oberführer*) and he was a softy, an Austrian intellectual from the Tyrol, a Ph.D. in law or philosophy who liked his comfort, women, booze and play. . . ."

"And increased revenues," interrupted Schielke. "I heard a few things about the easy life of von Sammern-Frankenegg when I was in the office of Bierkamp in Krakow. They used to say that valuables of all kinds—currency, expensive furs, drink—flowed in an invisible stream from the Warsaw Ghetto to his pockets and his mouth."

"That's a lie" cried Stroop. "Officers of the SS did not take bribes!"

"But von Sammern used to spend a lot of time in the Adria," I joined in. (The Adria was a well-known night club during the occupation and strictly '*Nur für Deutsche*,' i.e. only for Germans). Stroop quizzed me for a moment. I stood his glance and smiled slightly.

"I can guess, Herr Moczarski, that you had information about the parties of von Sammern and other Army people in the Adria. The *polnische Widerstandsbewegung* had a good intelligence. Indeed, Berlin knew that the *Judenrat* was attempting to SMOOTH somewhat some of the *SS-und Polizeiführer* men and that the Adria, with the clever German wife of its *Treuhänder* was the centre for it. But the most important criticism of von Sammern was his gutlessness. Krüger told me so."

"So on 17 April you were already in Warsaw?"

"Yes. It was a Saturday. Dr. Ludwig Hahn had sent me the address

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of my secret quarters in a cyphered telex to Krakow. Nobody beside himself knew that I was in Warsaw. Immediately we had a long, confidential talk. Hahn was not only the commander of the *Sicherheitspolizei* but also the chief of the SS intelligence service in Warsaw. Hence his numerous contacts and special position in Berlin. Hahn, following telephone conversations with Heinrich Himmler and Krüger, was frank with me. We exchanged information. I saw that Hahn was extremely well informed, not only in his own field but also in the inner politics of the SS headquarters. He impressed me with his knowledge of the relationships within the Warsaw circles of the party, the SS, the police, the army, the airforce, the civil administration of governor Fischer as well as some of the groups of German advisers, delegates, directors and industrialists. He mentioned the gifts and acceptance of financial assistance. He knew both the Polish and the Jewish communities. He complained about the real difficulty of developing a network of informers within the Polish resistance. He was concerned at the strength of your underground organizations and the efficiency of the Home Army intelligence. According to him one should treat every Pole as a potential spy. ' We are surrounded by spies, even the children watch us,' confided Hahn. From his office in Szucha Street often the most secret information leaked out. ' The Poles know how to demoralize us, using the most varied methods, beginning with booze, girls and taverns and finishing up with ideological softening-up, terror and street murders.' According to Hahn they were hand in glove with the Jews so that most of our plans concerning the Ghetto were immediately communicated to the Jews by the civilian and military intelligence of the Poles. As far as von Sammern was concerned," went on Stroop, " we had concordant ideas. Dr Hahn read out to me a super-secret report on irregularities perpetrated by the Austrian. When I asked whether the *SS-Reichsführer* and Krüger had knowledge of this report, Hahn promptly answered that ' he only conveyed upwards information backed by unassailable proof and, in the case of von Sammern, not all documents can be shown.' Hahn also explained the contacts and connections von Sammern had with the Old Guard of the NSDAP and the SS and gave me to understand various things Heinrich Himmler had only hinted at."

" It became clear to me that the only way to get rid of von Sammern would be to take advantage of the first slip-up of this ' Seyss-Inquart's follower ' during the planned assault on the Ghetto."

" Next day—a Sunday—I went to von Sammern's place in the Aleje Ujazdowskie. I arrived in the middle of a briefing. The talk was about the last-minute arrangements for the action against the Ghetto, due to start at 6 o'clock on the morning of 19 April. When I walked into his room von Sammern became confused. He guessed that my presence in Warsaw might not be helpful to his career. I took no part in the briefing because I had no wish to suggest corrections to an ineffective plan. Let this Austrian smarty-boots bon viveur make blunders! I thought. The more he makes the quicker he'll be ejected from his Warsaw armchair! "

" Von Sammern was nervous—chaotic. His staff rushed in all directions. He simply didn't know how to keep them in hand. I watched

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this mess and the indications of the general underestimation of the enemy. On one hand von Sammern had no true information about the strength and, on the other, after the initial strike, he expected to draw the action out over the next month and make deals with German industrialists, some Army quartermasters and some of the richer Jews."

"Leaving von Sammern a free hand to get on with the preparation, I made contact with all the commanders of the fighting units of police and SS in Warsaw, as well as some of our people in the *Wehrmacht*. I was trying to foresee developments. Hahn was saying that the action would take much longer than the planned three days. In spite of my experience in Lvov I would never have believed he could be so right and that the liquidation of the Ghetto could stretch into the summer. Hahn drew attention to all the complicated aspects of the situation. Left in the Ghetto were the more intelligent Jews who had a political and military organization. They were certain to put up resistance but, above all, Hahn was concerned about the Poles. What was likely to happen if they came out to rescue the Jews? To be sure they were inadequately armed but they could still attack us. Should we then destroy the whole of Warsaw? I thought about this possibility, and then of Hahn's words that the destruction of the city and the resulting provocation of the Poles would be a blunder. A political and strategic blunder."

"On 18 April 1943, in the early afternoon, I went to visit the area of the next day's attack. From Hahn I had taken a small car with Warsaw police plates and I wore an officer's coat without badges and changed my hat to that of an *SS-Untersturmführer*. I removed my monocle. My security escort was modest, although I was followed at a distance by two civilian cars provided by Hahn. I took a good look at the border of the Ghetto and the nearby 'Aryan' houses and checked the vigilance of the guards, composed of the 'askaris'."

"Where on earth did you get 'askaris' from?", I asked Stroop. "From Africa?" An 'askaris' is a native, a moslem, from the ex-German colonies.

"We used to call 'askaris' the volunteers to the auxiliary units of the SS, recruited mainly from the local population in the lands conquered in the East. As a rule they were Latvian, Lithuanian, Belorussian or Ukrainian. They were trained in *SS-Ausbildungslager* at Trawniki near Lublin. Not the best of soldiers, although nationalists and anti-semitic. Young, usually without primary education—practically savages and slippery with it. But they were obedient, physically strong and tough on the enemy. Many of the 'askaris' used in the *Grossaktion*, particularly in the initial stages, were Latvian. They could not speak Polish and, therefore, couldn't communicate with the Warsaw population. That's what we wanted. We also used to call them 'Trawniki-Männer'."

"Did you, on this secret inspection, penetrate inside the Ghetto?"

"Of course. I swallowed their Jewish stench, although the streets were deserted. People used to say that the courtyards and streets of the Ghetto were crowded but I saw practically no pedestrians. The apparent calm and lack of people showed that the Jews had been forewarned of the planned action. When I asked one of the *Wehrmacht*

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supply officers, whom I bumped into at the Többens factory in the Ghetto, whether he had noticed anything odd about the behaviour of the Jewish workers, he answered 'No.' You tell me, Herr Moczarski, how is it that I, a newcomer, immediately felt the threatening atmosphere while this older-than-me miserable lieutenant from the First World War noticed nothing? Többens, together with the Jewish managers and owners of his factory must have been feeding him well, giving him brandy and sending food parcels back to his family in Germany. I suppose this lieutenant must have been a member of the gang of General Schindler, who was in charge of the *Wehrmacht* armament and supply factories inside the GG. (General Government). This conservative-minded Mafia, under the pretext of urgent requirements for the Eastern front, for a long time clearly sabotaged the recommendations of Heinrich Himmler for a SPEEDY solution of the Jewish question in Warsaw, Lodz, Radom, Krakow and Lvov."

"When I was leaving the Ghetto," continued Stroop, "I heard a shot, from nearby on the 'Aryan' side. I rushed. It was a young 'askaris', a Latvian in a black overcoat. I gave him hell. He stood to attention and said: "It is so boring, Herr Lieutenant (he took me for one in my coat), when shall we finally start shooting at these animals in this Jewish zoo? . .'. He asked it so funnily in German, although in 'Neger-Deutsch.'[1] I smacked his blond head with my glove (he belonged to the Aryan race) and slipped a Reichsmark into his paw. I could count on the 'askaris'."

"In the evening I came back to my quarters, took a bath, rubbed myself with eau-de-Cologne and ate some delicious *Knödel*. I have loved *Knödel* since my days in the Sudetenland. I tucked in to a fillet steak with chips, drank a glass of good Burgundy and smoked an Egyptian cigarette made by 'Simon' (the best cigarettes in the world). Finally I made a phone call to Hahn to thank him for the feast, for it was he who had sent it. I asked him how he knew I loved *Knödel* and we laughed and joked. We exchanged the latest information; mine, my feelings about the Ghetto while he told me of his telephone conversations with Berlin and Krakow . . . and then I went to bed. Beforehand I had ordered my duty officer to check punctually at 3 o'clock whether von Sammern's order to close the Ghetto was being executed and to waken me at 4 o'clock."

"A 6 o'clock precisely on Monday, 19 April, von Sammern began the action. But he ordered the fighting units to move into position too early. At 5 o'clock, or even 4.30 a.m. armoured vehicles, a tank, and buses filled with SS men arrived at the gates of the Ghetto. All this noise warned the Jews that something special was up. Their outposts gave the alarm to the Jewish organizations and the friends of the Jews—the Home Army, the civil government and various minor Polish organizations must have been busy informing the Ghetto fighters about troop movements through the 'Aryan' streets towards the gates of the Jewish living quarters. It was already light because the sun is up early in April. While donning my field uniform I watched the trees with their thin branches trembling in the breeze, outlined against the blue and rose-coloured clouds. The air was clear. Birds twittered and

[1] Pidgin German.

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I recalled the woods around Detmold. Early spring had the same scent in the hills of *Hermann der Cherusker*."

"In springtime other smells also waft through the fields and orchards; the smell of manure and the stench of shit carted from the latrines," sensibly remarked Schielke, and added: "the worst is the smell of decomposing bodies. In 1917, when I was serving in the engineers, we were building a bridge near the front line. The grass was green, there were the first flowers, sunshine, but now and again the wind carried waves of the 'perfume of the dead,' as we used to call it. It made you sick. Human corpses have an impossible stench." Having said that he hummed a prison song, one I hadn't heard before, about the southern wind which blew into his face. "It was a wind from home," he concluded.

After a while Stroop continued: "I sat in my quarters by the telephones. A hurriedly gathered personal staff and my command unit was functioning perfectly. Drivers, dispatch riders, radio operators, telephonists and other aides were all poised. I followed von Sammern's action minute by minute and knew that at 6 o'clock he had brought too few troops to the Ghetto. Only 850 men and 16 officers, including the civilian police, the security forces, the *Wehrmacht* and the 'askaris.' For the first five minutes all was quiet. The Jews let our people come closer. When the SS entered the streets and von Sammern thought he would have a spring-time stroll, they suddenly drew strong fire, well aimed and planned. After such a welcome there was panic in our ranks. Like fools, von Sammern's officers pushed their men forward in large formations and very close. All hell was let loose. A mine blew up and wounded our men. The Jews and 'Aryans' were resisting strongly and in an organized manner. In fact they ATTACKED. I say Jews and Poles because we found out that there were among the Jews Polish *francs-tireurs*."

In our original talks Stroop had referred to the "Jewish bandits" or the "Polish bandits." As a result of my sharp reaction he had started using the French expression "franc-tireur" or "AK man,"[2] "AL man,"[3] or "ZOB-man." This last expression derived from the Jewish Combat Organization. Stroop continued: "This idiot, von Sammern-Frankenegg, introduced into closely built streets one tank, assigned to the *Waffen-SS* from French booty, and two armoured cars. The Jewish insurgents (Stroop used the expression for the first time), shot at both tank and cars and smothered them with Molotov cocktails."

"What kind of cocktails?", I asked.

"Bottles with a mixture, based on petrol, which would flame on impact. I suppose there was some phosphorus-covered ribbon stuck to its neck. When the bottle broke, fire started."

"But Molotov did not invent these 'cocktails'," I said.

"Of course not. But we often used names connected with Soviet leaders. According to the information of the *Abwehr* the recipe for the 'cocktails' was given to the Jews by the Polish Home Army. Later on, during the Warsaw Rising, they were massively used by the Poles, and the *Wehrmacht* experts had a high opinion of these defence

[2] AK=Home Army.
[3] AL=Left-wing People's Army.

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methods. Our armoured troops clearly feared these petrol bottles. After the suppression of the Warsaw Rising von dem Bach's staff officer used to call them 'General Bor's cocktails' or 'General Monter's cocktails.' When I was in Athens the head of the Security Service (the SD) drew my attention to the need to teach our troops how to fight these 'Monter cocktails' lest the Greek partisans started using them in future street fighting."

"Within half an hour von Sammern's troops were beaten off and demoralized. The tank was twice on fire and put out of action—as was one of the armoured cars. Von Sammern had as many as twelve men wounded—six *SS-Panzer* Grenadiers and *SS-Reiters* as well as another six from the foreign battalion trained at Trawniki. In my quarters telephones were buzzing. Dr Hahn arrived. Three times I talked to Krüger and once with Heinrich Himmler. Both were furious. The *Reichsführer*, always polite and smooth, used swear words several times. They gave orders that von Sammern should be suspended immediately as *SS-und Polizeiführer* in Warsaw. They recommended the withdrawal of all troops from the Ghetto and a fresh start in two hours' time, but under my command. There was no need to order a withdrawal as von Sammern's troops withdrew themselves, or rather, they FLED. During this time Dr Hahn was calm and talked about the political consequences of the reverses in the Ghetto whilst Krüger was swearing and yelling over the telephone that this is a 'disgrace,' a political and military 'disaster,' a slur 'on the honour and good name of the SS, and that this 'Doctor of Philosophy,' this 'Tyrolean intellectual.' 'this idiot,' this 'Charlie,' this '*Spitzbub*' must be locked up immediately. He ordered that once the troops had calmed down and re-grouped, all soldiers of the *Waffen-SS* in Warsaw must be thrown into battle. To my remark that we (Dr Hahn and myself) feared the attitude of the Poles, who could well make a move, Krüger replied: 'All SS forces should be used against the Ghetto! In order to counter the Poles you must order immediately a state of alarm of all German formations: the *Wehrmacht*, the Party, railways and postal guards.'"

"The *SS-Reichsführer* didn't speak so brutally. That he was cross was sure. He forbade the arrest of von Sammern. He gave us to understand that it would cause, due to various 'Austrian' pressures within the party, many unnecessary complications. 'Whether von Sammern will be punished for his inefficiency I do not know,' said the *Reichsführer*. "I suppose we shall post him somewhere in southern Europe. But, do tell him, *mein lieber* Stroop, that as of this minute I am removing him from the post of SS and Police Commander for the Warsaw district. You must remember that we must not hurt von Sammern's self-esteem. It has to be settled with kid gloves.'"

"Heinrich Himmler reinforced Krüger's orders, also recommending that we do nothing to provoke the Poles. He felt that the Home Army could only mobilize a few diversionary and fighting units against us, they were in no state to do more. But, just in case, the *Reichsführer* ordered a state of READINESS for all SS and police units in Warsaw and, through the Chief of Staff of the OKW (*Ober Kommando Wehrmacht*), for all the *Wehrmacht* and *Luftwaffe* units within the General Government."

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" Having taken command of the units attacking the Jews, I regrouped them and calmed them down. Everybody who wanted it got a glass of wine or schnapps. Then I increased the striking power by bringing in all remaining unused units from the third training and reserve battalion of the *SS-Panzer* Grenadiers and the SS training and reserve cavalry unit. I replaced the damaged tank and armoured car from other SS units and, by 8 o'clock the complement of officers was increased by 100 per cent and that of soldiers by 50 per cent. In addition I ordered the fighting to be done by small units sensibly deployed in width and depth."

" We started. Again for the first few minutes all was quiet. Suddenly the enemy opened up from various houses with rifles, machine guns and probably grenade throwers. I ordered the attack stopped and the artillery brought up. We had at our disposal one howitzer and three anti-aircraft guns with a hell of a striking power. Several buildings, which that day were the principal Jewish resistance points, were demolished. Our machine guns, too, were very helpful, forcing Jewish fighters to withdraw from the roofs and higher floors of fortified buildings. They fled through canals and cellars to other centres of defence, and to bunkers. Searching through buildings and courtyards we caught barely two hundred Jews. The rest escaped. I therefore directed my troops to other nearby buildings from which occasional shots were coming. I wanted to discover bunkers and fortified positions and destroy them. In this we partially succeeded. The special units took a long time, however, to overcome the enemy's resistance. We tried various methods, amongst others, artillery, flame-throwers and mines. After heavy fighting we captured some places but we failed to catch one single member of the Jewish Fighting Organization. They all managed to withdraw. We found in the neighbourhood only four hundred ' civilian ' Jews—the rest just soaked away into the canals and labyrinthine underground passages. I ordered the flooding of canals in the hope of destroying some of the escaping enemy, but it was little good. Maybe some Jews were drowned but the rest reached other defensive positions."

" That first day of fighting was extremely difficult for us," continued the *SS-Gruppenführer* Jürgen Stroop. " We had to act very cautiously, but courageously and with determination. I did not aim that day at a crushing psychological blow to the enemy, but rather at raising the morale of our SS troops after the morning's defeat. I had positioned the tank and the armoured cars behind the front line and had them surrounded by SS infantry. Nevertheless, several petrol bombs landed near them. The fighters throwing the ' cocktails ' must have been good sportsmen, for the distances were considerable. I ordered attacks on the houses from which bottles and shots were coming but recommended my SS men to be sensible and not take too many risks. Because of that the operation was a fairly long one. The engineers must have set a few houses alight but, on the whole, there were few fires that day."

" I tried not to penetrate too far into the Ghetto. I wanted, and I believe I succeeded in capturing and clearing a small area which would become the safe starting-base for our operations next day. Towards

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evening the Jews were not particularly aggressive. From time to time chaotic shooting would open up but it seemed that the general situation was quietening down, which for us was essential. I had proved to the troops and officers that we had made up—and well—for the morning's losses, that we had captured some ground and that things would surely be easier next day."

"Having counted the captured Jews and dispatched them wherever appropriate, I called together my subordinate commanders to commend them for their battle efficiency and the good spirit and discipline of their units. I singled out in particular Major Sternhagel from the *Schutzpolizei*. He had behaved admirably, with calm and courage but at the same time with the necessary caution in action. He became *via facti* my second-in-command and immediate aide. I therefore appointed him to lead the fighting the next day."

"At about 8 p.m. I began to withdraw my troops. The firing died down and the Jews were as silent as if all the houses, factories and cellars of the Ghetto were deserted. I withdrew all units, even those occupying the conquered area, and sent them to barracks. But as I wanted to be sure that the Home Army and other underground units could make no direct contact with the Jews I changed the arrangement of the outside guards."

"Instead of the 120 'askaris' who had for several days surrounded the Ghetto I put in the outposts by the gates and walls on the 'Aryan' side about 250 soldiers of the *Waffen-SS* in addition to scores of German policemen and factory guards of German nationality. They were all armed to the teeth and I ordered, in case of a sudden attack by the Poles that they should shoot mercilessly and even set the adjoining 'Aryan' houses on fire."

"*Herr General* has told us about the losses incurred by *SS-Oberführer Doktor* von Sammern-Frankenegg. They were, as were heard, six SS men and six 'askaris' wounded. How many fell, or were wounded from eight in the morning until eight at night when you, *Herr General*, were in command?" asked Gustav Schielke.

Stroop winced but, warmed up by his story, answered immediately. "Our losses that day were twenty-four wounded. Nobody was killed. When I was in command they wounded ten SS men, no 'askaris' but, in addition, two Polish policemen who got mixed up in it unnecessarily and were lightly wounded. Among our wounded there were unfortunately two members of the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) out of the 50 security policemen who took part in that first day's action. Both were in a serious condition. Fatal wounds. Doctor Hahn immediately took care of them and later reproached me gently for allowing members of that specialized force into a particularly dangerous zone."

"When I returned to my personal quarters Hahn was already there with an excellent supper. He was sitting in a comfortable armchair sipping a French aperitif and looking at the stars and the spring skies. As I reached the threshold of my office I heard him say: 'Congratulations, *Herr General*! Wonderful! You got us out of a disgraceful situation. Don't bother to take a bath now—just wash your hands and sit down to the *Knödel* before they get cold. They have just brought them in.'"

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"We stuffed ourselves with *Knödel*, which it turned out that Dr. Hahn also liked—or pretended to. During the roast that followed—venison stuffed with truffles—(where did Hahn get those truffles?!) we exchanged views and information, beginning with the wounded officials of the SD. He was particularly concerned about *SS-Oberscharführer* Rudolf Kosmal, one of Hahn's distinguished intelligence men in Warsaw, and I promised to do everything possible to avoid any SD men being killed or wounded. It happened at the end of April and the beginning of May that we lost two more men from the security police assigned to me—one wounded and the other killed—but, since Hahn never mentioned them, I presumed they were not from the SD."

"You might think that I went straight to bed? Quite the contrary. I bathed, changed my shirt, uniform and boots and got down to work. I held a telephone conversation with Krüger, who was getting impatient in Krakow, and reported briefly to Heinrich Himmler the events of my 12-hour operation in the Ghetto and the results. While for the connection with Krakov I had to wait 20 minutes, I got through to the *SS-Reichsführer* immediately. I only had to tell the telephone exchange a special code word. Heinrich Himmler also expressed his satisfaction and congratulated me. He said in a soft and agreeable voice that I had not let him down, but also warned me not to be too optimistic about the next few days."

"Listening to my report he came to the conclusion that the Jews were determined, organized and equipped and also had the backing of the Polish population and of the Polish military resistance. '*Lieber* Stroop.' he said, 'you will still have difficult moments. Even very difficult. Be careful and consult with Hahn. I authorize you to use every available means, but only if it becomes necessary. Try not to burn and demolish houses until all the factories in the Ghetto—particularly the armament factories—are evacuated. Our people, the tools and machines, the stores and finished goods should be protected from fire, gun shot and explosions as far as is possible.'"

"After these telephone conversations and the conference with Hahn I held a briefing with my personal staff and the commanders of the independent combat units. I stressed the importance of the full execution of orders by all officers and men of the *Wehrmacht* under my command. I went to bed late as I had to make a note or two in my diary. Before stretching out in the luxurious bed prepared by my orderly I drank a glass of excellent Burgundy. Just about to fall asleep I was jerked into wakefulness by one of the three telephones standing on a mahogany table at the bedside '*Donnerwetter*! —I yelled into the receiver. How dare you wake me up. Are you fool enough not to realize that in a few hours' time I must again command operations in the Ghetto and that I must have at least four hours sleep?'"

"There was a slight cough at the other end and, as I was about to embark on a real dressing-down I suddenly realized that it was a familiar voice. Indeed, it was Heinrich Himmler! I jumped to my feet (they stood on a Persian carpet) and began to apologize profusely. He, gently chuckling, just said: 'don't be cross, my dear Stroop, that I have wakened you and interrupted your rest but, after thinking over

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your report and Krüger's telexes I have come to some more general conclusions. Don't forget, *Herr General* Stroop, that you have only been through the initial phase of the Great Action. 19 April is merely the overture to an historic event which will be called *die Grossaktion* in Warsaw. You directed that overture wonderfully. It came out particularly well when compared with the feeble efforts of that muddler von Sammern. Since I like Wagner's operas and our present National-Socialist musician conductor, allow me to say to you: play on Maestro, and our *Führer* and I shall never forget you for it.' "

**Die Grossaktion**

The *Grossaktion* was carried out with difficulty and contrary to plan. None of the numerous operational orders was fully executed. Even the blowing up of the Great Warsaw Synagogue—planned for 15 May—was delayed by a day in spite of 10 days of preparatory work.

Once I asked Stroop: " Did the enemy, that is to say the Jews, surprise you by their courage and fighting ability?"

" Undoubtedly yes " answered Stroop. " In general we underestimated the Jews. They surprised us on 19 April [4] and, later on, surprised us virtually every day. Our reconnaisance, both for the purpose of tactical assumptions and for each day's battle was not of the best."

" You mean that your information and understanding were wrong?" I said.

" Yes " answered Stroop.

" As far as the clarity of the orders was concerned," I went on, " it doesn't seem to have been too good. You have mentioned many times the ' disorder ' during the fighting, the bad communications and, sometimes, even the lack of discipline among your troops. This is a question of leadership, which should not be weak or indecisive."

" You say my leadership was weak? But you often claimed yourself that during the *Grossaktion* I was acting toughly and even brutally."

" You might have been tough on the enemy, particularly when you met with such resistance from the Jews, but I am concerned with the fact that you were hesitant when it came to decisions regarding your men and the means at your disposal. Why, for instance, did you withdraw your troops at night from positions won during the day? [5] Why did you consult so often with Himmler, Krüger and even asked the help of Dr Hahn? "

" Because," explained Stroop, " in many cases the situation was very difficult, even to the point of pinning down my troops."

" That, I suppose, is what is meant by confused orders and weak leadership, although maybe one could not have acted otherwise," interjected Schielke.

We sat thinking for a while. Schielke was the first to speak up. " The position of our SS, Army and Police units, under the command of *Herr General* was, objectively speaking, a thousand times better than the position of the Jews. We had practically an unlimited supply

[4] On 19 April the attackers were surprised by the fact that the Jews had anticipated the assault.

[5] During the early days of the fighting. (Translator's note).

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of food, ammunition and equipment. We also had wide opportunities for manoeuvre and for getting in reinforcements. But we did not use these opportunities fully and so the fighting in the Ghetto, instead of lasting three days, took 28 and more. It seems," Schielke went on, "that the total force at the disposal of General Stroop was enough (as in fact it was shown to be) for a show of force but not for a quick decisive action."

"Time was what mattered, time!" I exclaimed. "Whoever *quickly* achieves victory in accordance with his previous plans and preparation, he is really the victor. The one who defeats his opponent after taking ten times longer than expected, though formally he is the winner, is the loser."

"But we won. We turned the Ghetto into a brick-strewn desert and expelled from it 71,000 Jews[6]" loudly exclaimed Stroop. "We won! So why do you say, Herr Moczarski that we lost?".

"I shall not speak of the military problem as I have already explained my view. I consider that, relatively speaking, you lost. What is a hundred times more serious, however, is that it was for you a moral defeat."

"What does that consist of?" asked Stroop.

"To begin with, you fought a battle the object of which was genocide. It is obvious how history is going to judge it. But from the point of view of your own Nazi opinions and interests a far worse defeat was caused by the very fact of the courageous resistance of the Jews. By their attitude and their actions they refuted your theories. The Jews showed such fortitude in the service of higher ideals—for which it is worth fighting and dying—that all your ideological anti-semitism fell to pieces."

"You talk about those Jews who resisted and fought to the last," interjected Schielke, "but, after all, we shouldn't forget that the masses were unarmed and went to their death without resistance. Does the effort and the merit of the relatively small Jewish Military Organization reflect upon the passive Jewish masses?"

Not letting me answer, Stroop replied to Schielke: "We have already mentioned the strength of the Jewish Military Organization (J.M.O.). I believe that the organized insurgents numbered three to four thousand. Herr Moczarski thinks that the J.M.O. had between three to five hundred people. For me it is immaterial how many sworn soldiers were at the disposal of the J.M.O. High Command. There could have been more—or less. It does not change the problem which consists in the fact that the activity of the J.M.O. affected the whole Jewish community in the Ghetto and caused a chain reaction. They themselves, the leaders from Mila Street may well not have known how well they succeeded in firing the hearts of thousands of previously passive Jews."

"Fighting in the Ghetto was truly difficult. Whatever others may say, I shall always believe that the Jews were well prepared for the struggle and that they showed really great valour. How strong and well organized was the resistance put up by the Warsaw Jews is shown by

[6] As Stroop previously calculated, 71,000 Jews were in fact killed.

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the fact that we destroyed in all 631 bunkers. It doesn't matter whether these were real bunkers or shelters, for a shelter could become at any moment a base for armed resistance and aggression. Can you imagine, Herr Moczarski how much time, money and effort it took for the Jewish engineers and technicians to construct so many bunkers in complete secrecy? This is impressive!"

"I was the German Commander-in-Chief of the fighting in the Ghetto," continued the excited Stroop, without showing any appearance of lying or deceit. "I had a broad view and the knowledge of very many facts permitting me to draw more general conclusions. You—soldiers of the Home Army—had no such possibilities. Even the Jews themselves, cooped up in isolated bunkers, had only a very limited field of observation. I was asked many times by my colleagues among the SS leadership why, in my reports to the *SS-Reichsführer* and to Krüger 'the Jews were made to look so good.' My answer was always simple. I said that I myself and Dr Hahn had the most complete information because none of the elements in the situation of April-May, 1943 could escape our attention. I shall never change my opinion, even if all the eye-witnesses and historians say differently, because it rests on my own experience during the *Grossaktion* in Warsaw."

**Flags over the Ghetto**

"On the second day of the assault on the Ghetto, on Tuesday, 20 April, I woke up before dawn, a bit tired but full of beans," continued Stroop with unusual zest. He was obviously excited as he relived for the n-th time his "creative part in the *Grossaktion* in Warsaw."

I did not forget any of the words or asides of Jürgen Stroop. In my mind's eye I followed all the situations, even saw them. My own flashbacks were made easier by the fact that the former *SS-Gruppenführer* was using the language of police reports, while I well remembered the reality of the spring of 1943, which I saw from the "Aryan" side of the Ghetto.

Although Stroop sat on a stool next to me I was not conscious of his prison garb. Under the influence of the tension—he was talking about fascinating, albeit atrocious events, I saw him *not* in his purple wind-jacket, his white cravat or the worn-out shoes of a prisoner but in his uniform of *SS-Brigadeführer*, with decorations and *Eichenlaub*, in his Tyrolean hat and cavalry boots. I saw his gleaming eye and tight lips. I could see the efficiency, the zest for the task and the cold smile of self-satisfaction.

Only once did I come down to earth, to the green and white cell, the clouds seen from behind bars and the close-cropped 'Mokotov' style head of the General. It did not last long. I was quickly drawn back to the power Jürgen Stroop had exercised over the Ghetto, when he went on to say:

"On the second day of the Great Action I was filled with hope and at the same time *apprehension* about the fate of the next assault. Whatever we might say, the defeat of von Sammern and the later unimpressive result of the fighting must have affected the morale of

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my men in some way. From the start of the second day's fighting I was frightened. How will the Jews behave? Will the 'Aryans' attack? Will the SS men be scared of hand-to-hand fighting? While shaving I was considering all these possibilities. I gobbled my breakfast, thinking about the hours to come. I confess that from time to time I was very nervous. But a commander should be nervous, particularly when faced with a difficult situation. Before setting out to get into my car (I was alone in the room) I crossed myself, as Mutti had taught me to do. When I sat beside the driver and inhaled the spring air, calm returned."

"At seven o'clock the first assault units again entered the Ghetto. I divided them into groups of 36 soldiers plus an officer or N.C.O. I ordered Police Major Sternhagel (who was in direct command of the operation) cautiously to enter the area we had captured the previous day, to clear up the '*Restghetto*' and, later, forcefully comb the whole area within the surrounding walls. I thought we should complete the main task that day and that the third and following days would be left for mopping-up operations and general clearing up. I was mistaken."

"What do you mean by '*Restghetto*'?" asked Schielke.

"'*Restghetto*' is that part of the Jewish quarter in Warsaw which was voluntarily vacated by its inhabitants in July 1942," explained Stroop.

Here I saw red. "Are you kidding, *Herr General*!? Where do you think the inhabitants of that part of the Ghetto went? and *voluntarily* at that. On 22 July 1942 you began the first deportation of Warsaw Jews to *extermination* camps. Around that time you must have deported to the Treblinka gas chambers some 320,000 people. And how many thousands were murdered on the spot, in the Ghetto?"

Stroop wanted to interrupt, but Schielke, both moved and curious, immediately joined in:

"Don't interrupt, *Herr General.* Do go on Herr Moczarski, it's very interesting!"

"Every day, as I remember from the reports and conversations with my colleagues in the Information Department of the High Command of the Home Army; with 'Vaclav,' 'Pisarczyk,' 'Bruno' and, in particular, with my boss 'Tomasz,'" I went on, "*every day* they sent out groups of 6,000 Jews to the gas chambers and crematoria of Treblinka. In Warsaw the victims were packed into railway cattle trucks, a hundred people to a waggon. That was the way they sent the famous educationalist, social worker and founder of a well-known children's home, Dr Janusz Korczak. Together with the children in his care. . . ."

I could not go on. Schielke was looking at the blue sky beyond the window. There was silence. I took a cloth to wipe the floor but Stroop snatched it away. Without saying a word he went on wiping. Slowly we all calmed down.

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# Cuba in Africa

**Hugh Thomas**

AFTER the Cuban victory in Angola, there were many people who came forward and eloquently reassured us that "the circumstances of Angola were special enough to make another (Cuban) intervention unlikely."

Perhaps that reassuring attitude had its justification. Before Angola, the Cuban army, as an institution, had never been used before outside Cuba itself (as opposed to training guerrillas either in Cuba or *en place*). It also became known that half the Cubans in Angola were reservists. There seemed to be some withdrawals.

But what is the position today? So far from having disappeared, the Cuban "flying picket" (as they would be described in English trade union circles) has increased to 40,000 or 50,000 armed men [1] based mostly in Angola (25,000) and Ethiopia (17,000). In addition to establishing, and subsequently propping up, Neto in Angola, Cuban "tanks, artillery, and aviation specialists, as well as motorized infantry" (those are Castro's words) [2] were used to smash the Somalis in the Ogaden: "Our cooperation became indispensable," Castro said. The same troops are playing some role against the Eritreans. Cuba will withdraw from Angola only when Angola asks her to,[3] and she interprets the treaty binding her to support Angola against external aggression as covering the continuing resistance by Savimbi and Roberto. A Cuban mission has been noticed in Lesotho too though apparently in a more complicated way. Soviet helicopters, piloted by Cubans, have been dropping guerrillas in the tribal trust lands of Rhodesia. The truth about Cuban involvement in Zaire is not yet clear but the evidence that Cubans at least assisted the "gendarmes" in their attacks there in May seems to have been convincing enough to the US Senate.

In addition to the large commitments to areas of open war, the Cubans in Africa are supported by a civil or military presence in another 15 or so well-chosen countries. Probably, there are about 5,000 Cuban civilians in Angola, 650–750 in Mozambique.[4] There was once

[1] *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 May 1978.

[2] Castro in *Granma* 26 Mar. 1978.

[3] C. R. Rodríguez at the first congress of C.D.R. (Committee for the Defence of the Revolution). This has recently been formalized at state level in an agreement between Fidel Castro and Agostino Neto.

[4] Castro said, on 26 July 1977, that there would be 6,000 Cuban civilians abroad by 1 Jan. 1978, of whom 700 would be doctors. In addition to the above, US intelligence estimates not long ago suggested 25 military advisers in Uganda; 120 of the same in Sierra Leone; 350–555 technicians in Tanzania; 650–750 of the same in Mozambique; 30 military men in Madagascar; 100–150 in Libya; 300–500 in Guinea; 200 in Guinea Bissau; 300–400 in Equatorial Guinea; 10–20 in Benina; and 35 medical men in Libya.

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a brigade in Syria and there is some Cuban representation in the East German fief of South Yemen.

As to long-term Cuban aims in Africa, I think it should be appreciated that any expectation, such as suggested by President Carter with painful innocence, that Cuba would be likely to pack up and go home is absurd. In a speech on 1 January 1978, Castro said:

> We're now helping and we'll go on helping Angola. We're now helping and we'll go on helping Mozambique. . . . And not only are we helping the governments of Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and other governments in Africa, but we're also helping the liberation movements in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. We're helping them now and we'll go on helping them.[5]

At home, meantime, Cuba acts as host to several thousand African schoolchildren under Marxist-Leninist education. Relations with both Habash and Arafat are reasonably close. (Habash was in Cuba in April.) Some Cuban involvement is likely with the Polisario and perhaps with the Canary Island nationalists operating from Algiers.

Thus we surely have a new situation. Cuba, acting in full collaboration with Russia, has shown that it has fully realized, *first*, that a small body of well trained men is as effective in Africa now as it was in days of older empires; *second* that, as Castro put it two months ago, " There are no longer any distances in today's world." [6]

IT is sometimes suggested that Cuba's activities in Africa should be considered independently of those of Russia. That I believe to be an illusion.

Cuba may very well have reasons to accept with greater alacrity her role in fitting in with Russia's plans in Africa and elsewhere than would be the case with say, Czechoslovakia. In addition, some of the ideas for African intervention may very well have come from Cuba. But the over-all plans must derive from Russia, where, after all, Castro reported after his visit to Africa last year; which has provided all the heavy war material used in both Angola and Ethiopia; which provided the IL 62 transport aircraft which takes the Cubans about Africa, and which, in the end, provides the Cuban army with everything they have, from their light weapons to their uniforms, including probably their tinned rations.

In addition, during the last few years, following Cuba's economic failures (in particular, Castro's failure to achieve his goal of 10 million tons of sugar in 1970) and also the failure of the " armed struggles " in Latin America, Cuba has been effectively made into a Soviet bureaucracy.

For 10 years Castro has slavishly supported every move in Russian foreign policy, over the Prague spring, the Middle East, China, every-

[5] *Granma* 1 Jan. 1978.
[6] *Granma* 26 Mar. 1978.

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thing. There is no whiff of Eurocommunism in Havana, as a recent statement by the Cuban representative at the congress of the Spanish Communist Party made clear.

It is believed that the KGB was able virtually to carry out a purge of its Cuban subsidiary, the D.G.I.,[7] in 1971, and it is even thought by some that that body carried on the KGB's work in London in 1972, after the then British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs threw out the 100 Russians.

In effect, the Russians have surely agreed to underwrite the Cuban economy in return for certain services. Most of those involved (apart from Castro himself) in the Cuban African adventure are men who were communists long before Castro was in power: Raul Castro, the long-standing minister of defence; the new foreign minister, Malmierca; the head of the foreign relations of the Cuban Communist Party, Soto (ambassador here for a time); Raul Valdes Vivo, whose job has been to sell the Ethopian war to the Cuban people, with a bestselling short history of the Ethiopian revolution; Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, the deputy prime minister; and Severo Aguirre, the ambassador in Moscow. All have been communists since at least the 1950s.

The bear-hugging embraces of Cuban and Russian military leaders have recently been more and more prominently illustrated in the Cuban press, and suggest that Cuba is now Russia's closest and most reliable ally, her armed forces being virtually a part of the Red Army.

Russian motives for wishing for a forward policy in Africa must be these: she wants oversea naval bases to sustain a global policy; she wants to be able to interrupt the enemy's sea routes in case of war. Both these aims were summarized as such by Admiral Gorshkov, the "father of the Russian navy," in his recent book (he was last in Cuba in December 1977).[8] Russia is presumably also interested in capturing —or at least cutting off the West's access to—the minerals of Africa south of the Equator. Another motive, probably, is to achieve further demoralization in the West, or among the West's friends in Africa itself, by achieving swift victories by the skilful manipulation of very modern weapons in regions which, in the long run at least, could be used to threaten the West's supplies of oil. A reasonable Russian assumption would surely be that, if the Horn of Africa and much of South Africa succumb to Marxist-Leninist regimes, then the Middle East would begin to make its adjustments with the new paramount power, so in the end falling to Soviet influence, perhaps without much bloodshed.

Presumably both the Russians and the Cubans appreciate too that the USA is still having a sabbatical year or two, after the fall of Saigon, and they must know that (despite Mr Carter's speech at Annapolis) the chances of any change of US policy while President

[7] *Direccion General de Investigacion.*
[8] As quoted in *Survival*, Jan./Feb. 1977.

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Carter and Mr Young are in power are modest. They also know that, as yet, the Europeans have failed to rouse themselves from an equal sloth and torpor into devising any policy towards Africa—a torpor that does not even have a defeat like Vietnam to explain or justify it.

Russia, it is fair to recall, has been interested in Africa for a long time: Molotov asked Jimmy Byrnes for a share in the Belgian Congo in 1946.[9] She has been assisting and training leaders of Marxist-Leninist movements in Africa for a generation.

The Russians must also be interested in testing out the Cuban armed forces, in which they have invested a great deal of money and equipment, in conditions of real combat. Is it possible that that Russian investment in Cuban military affairs from the 1960s on was specifically designed for these tasks? It looks like it. The Russian army has, it should be recalled, used international brigades (Czechs, Hungarians) ever since its own civil war and notably, of course, in the civil war in Spain. Not only Cubans but also East Germans have been concerned in both Ethiopia and South Yemen and probably in the Congo. (I cannot resist pointing out that General Hoffmann, the East German minister of defence, in Angola recently, was in 1937 commissar of the 1st battalion of the Thaelmann Brigade in the Spanish Civil War.)

SO much for Russia. What about Cuba? Their interests in Africa seem to be these: Africa gives Castro a means of articulating his obvious desire for an historic role which, particularly after the effective bureaucratization of the Cuban government after 1970, cannot be satisfied on the island. (Castro has always had dreams of world power: in the guerrilla war in Cuba in the 1950s he took the code name "Alexander"!)

The African adventure gives the Cuban armed forces something positive to do since otherwise their heavy armament, privileges, power and huge size might, even in the controlled conditions of Cuba, seem overtly to be excessive, particularly when there has ceased to be any perceptible US threat—though it may be that these forces were built up for that purpose. The Cuban armed forces number about 200,000 including 10,000 state security troops, plus 100,000 "people's militia." Per head of its 9·6 million population, this is probably the largest in the world.

The African adventure is certainly something likely to have an effect on that approximate half of the Cuban population which is black or mulatto. Cuban blacks have had a rather ambiguous history under the revolution; on the one hand, being on the whole poor before 1959, they have profited more than whites from those health and education programmes which have been the only benefits achieved by ordinary people; on the other hand, there are probably fewer blacks among the top leaders of Cuba than there were under Batista (himself

[9] At the Moscow meeting of foreign ministers in 1946.

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mulatto), and the ritual black culture of Cuba has suffered under Marxist-Leninism.

Since the failure to export the Cuban revolution to South America, there has been a government campaign to emphasize the African and black (slave) side of Cuba's history, probably in an effort to stave off a black power movement which, at one time, seemed a possible source of discontent within Cuba. The African adventure (now often presented in propaganda as a Cuban return to the continent where Cuban slaves came from in the past) may have the same effect.

There is, however, another important point. The Cubans have felt a desire to try to export their revolution since its earliest days. Not that what now seems to be a combination of military repression and economic failure has much to commend it in either South America or Africa. Cuba was more developed in 1959 than any of the countries she is now engaged with, and there are many other important points of difference.[10] Even so, that sense of mission is still felt and it still even communicates itself to others, rather as the early Bolshevik or early Nazi revolutions seemed intoxicating to unwary temporary visitors. The fact that Cuba must have a higher number of political prisoners probably than any other Latin American country, and the fact that its standard of living is now well below the Caribbean average instead of well above it (as it was in 1959), do not seem to matter.

This sense of mission is explained by a tradition of political violence second to none. Cuban internal politics during most of this century has been plagued by political gangsterism and Cuba's new role is in many ways a globalization of that. Castro's own career began at the University among gangster groups; aged 21, he joined in a dotty attempt to try to overthrow Trujillo in Santo Domingo; at 27, he was hurling himself and a gang of followers against one of Batista's barracks in Santiago de Cuba; and it is very much the same man, a *guerrillero* more than a Marxist, who is now hurling himself, trusting his nerves and phenomenal luck over many years, against " imperialism " in Africa.

The Cuban revolution in its propaganda (and, with such half-fascist, half-communist regimes, propaganda is the true indicator of the culture) has always emphasized this concept of " struggle." The press is full even now of heroicized stories from the history of the guerrilla war which Castro organized against Batista. In a speech recently, Castro remarked: " the true revolutionary soldier is made of two things: his soul and his weapon." Particularly his weapon, we may perhaps add.

Finally, when talking of Cuban and Russian interests, I think one should beware of tales which suggest that the Cuban intervention was only caused by that of South Africa or the CIA. I have not seen Mr Stockwell's book[11] but its moral—that the CIA provoked Cuban

[10] Cuba was probably the tropical country with the highest capital per head in 1959.
[11] A recent CIA defector.

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intervention—seems on the surface to be yet another example of guilt-ridden anxiety. South Africa first intervened in Angola on 23 October 1975. Neto and the MPLA all had contacts with Cuba and Russia stretching back for 10 years. By October 1975 4,000 Cubans were apparently already there. President Neto asked for substantial aid from Cuba in May 1975. Large-scale Cuban manoeuvres, specifically for Angolan circumstances, were held in July 1975, the Cuban military command was reorganized to make the Angolan intervention possible in August, and ships carrying Cubans across the South Atlantic began to be loaded in September. The only thing that was delayed till *after* the South African attack was the ferrying of Cubans by Russian IL 62s. That began in January 1976, though not in reaction to South African intervention: rather, it occurred when the Russians realised that the US congress would do nothing.

IT must be said that the Cubans, well managed though they have shown themselves (for example, they set up a quite effective double tier of command in 1975 whereby, when the commanders of the Cuban armies went to Angola, their deputies took over and then the deputies took over in Angola after six months), despite that, they have not yet been tested against a serious army (of—say—Rhodesia or South Africa). The war against Batista was a long time ago and it was small scale. Nor, frankly, have the Cubans so organized Angola that, if they left, the MPLA would survive. Indeed Savimbi and Roberto are still very much alive, and more will probably be heard of them for a long time.

Such information as I have is that, though the Cubans may be reasonably successful in pushing Marxist-Leninism among the Portguese, and perhaps the French-speaking countries, they have not been so successful among English-speaking ones. Even Machel, in Mozambique, though a self-proclaimed Marxist, seems to prefer South Africans to Cubans to run his ports.

Cuban and Russian aid against the Somalis and the Eritreans is obviously in the short run unpopular in the Arab world.

Then there have been some adverse effects in Cuba as a result of these adventures. Though the swift victories in Ethiopia and Angola may have made the Cuban government at home temporarily popular, it is hard to believe that a long commitment both military and civilian will really be popular in Cuba, a country which is itself still painfully short of all kinds of consumer goods, not to speak of cars, transport generally, even writing paper, clothes, schoolbooks, etc.

The modest inhibition that Mr Carter has placed on further steps towards a Cuban-US *détente* will obviously prevent any US technological help (as, for example, in processing the valuable but difficult Cuban nickel), the full exploitation of which could make possible greater freedom from Russia than now seems practical.

Inside Cuba the Russian alliance is publicly emphasized more than

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ever, creating what may very well be a huge fund of resentment which could be of huge benefit to the West if only it could be tapped.

That there has been some criticism from within Cuba of the commitment to Africa comes from slight indications, certainly, but clearly there have been some civilian complaints, since otherwise there would not have been a mention by Castro in a speech last year of " occasionally exaggerated criteria as to who cannot be dispensed with in production "—a unique concession by Castro to the existence of criticism.

In addition, Cuba's appearance on the international scene has raised for the first time for years a serious consideration in at least the European press (*The Times* and *Cambio* in Spain) of what Cuba is like at home. There is at last the beginning of a general realization that it is a very tough tyranny indeed. For too long, Cuba has had the benefit of the doubt in a Western liberal opinion far too obsessed by the alleged evils of the United States to think of anything else.

NOW if we ask what the Western position about all this is, or should be, I have no doubt that at the very least our military planners wish us to be able to maintain precisely what Russia would like us not to have: access to sea-lanes round the Cape for oil tankers, and access to African minerals.

Apart from that, we have failed to articulate any real policy for the countries concerned and that is part of the trouble. Africa is undergoing very rapid urbanization, if not industrialization, and has innumerable social problems. Is it part of Western policy to try to achieve any particular form of evolution in those countries in the 1980s? Is it US policy? France, on the other hand, *has* a policy: to maintain, if necessary by force, governments in her ex-colonial territories which are basically friendly to her. Except in the case of Algeria (for obvious reasons) she has been largely successful even if that policy is modest and sometimes short-sighted.

We may regard the Russians and the Cubans as having an evil message for Africa, but at least they have a message. We may regard Mr Smith and Mr Vorster as having an evil message, less or more evil according to taste than Brezhnev's, but at least they too have a picture of the sort of future they would like to see.

PROVIDING we could work out what we *want* to do, there is still, in fact, a very great deal which the West could do to forestall the collapse of its interests in central and southern Africa. Some of these things are matters of propaganda, some of them more practical.

I do not see why Cuba, for example, should be able to get away with a continued membership of the nonaligned group of nations. I do not see why the facts of life in both Cuba and Russia are not widely known in Africa. Everyone knows the name of Steve Biko, who was killed in a South African gaol; why does no one know that of Pedro

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Boitel who died in 1972 in equally mysterious circumstances in that Cuban gaol system which no outsider has ever visited since 1959? Why did no one officially repudiate the extremely foolish remark of Andrew Young that Cuba is giving Angola stability? After all, what Castro's government has offered Cuba itself has been the stability of the camp of "re-education" and there is no reason to suppose that the Pax Angola or the Pax Ethiopia Cuba-style will be more agreeable. Quite the contrary.

How can *détente* in Europe be justified when it seems more and more as if it is an opportunity for Russia to establish her position impregnably in Africa? Surely it is absurd to make concessions to the idea of *détente* in these circumstances? The cold war is boiling away in Africa as never before.

Moreover, is it quite out of the question to give arms and training to those Angolan and Ethiopian factions which are opposed to the Marxist-Leninist regimes there—above all Savimbi in Angola? Why could there not be guerrilla training in Europe for the real friends of the West?

Can there really be no form of linkage between US wheat deliveries to Russia and Russian behaviour in Africa and elsewhere?

Has the US quite forgotten that 16 years ago a President was able to insist on restrictions of Cuba's freedom of action in respect of nuclear weapons? Sooner or later, we might recall that Cuba is an island in the West's sphere of influence, that the navies of all the main Western allies are permanently in the Caribbean, and it would be physically possible to restrain Cuba's use of the high seas for this sort of international intervention. Is it not our hope too that one day Cuba will return to the ranks of free nations?

Such things may seem inconceivable to contemplate under the present US administration But is there not now at last a chance that the serious threat which Cuba and Russia are making to Western interests in Africa, combined with the passive attitude of the US, may just give that necessary push for Europe to consider, at long last, if late, the need to formulate and put into effect a new European defence policy? Perhaps these impudent victories of the Cubans and Russians in Africa may, in graphic form, give us an opportunity to reverse the "endless retreat" (in Hugh Seton-Watson's words) before the Soviet advance; in European terms: *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi.* When President Giscard went to help President Mobutu in 1977 with Moroccan troops he justified his action by saying that Europe's voice could not be silent in the future of Africa. That makes him unpopular among NATO members and EEC ministers alike in Brussels, I gather, but that action, like his and the Belgian action in May 1978 was actually, I believe, among the most popular things done in Europe's name.

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# Views and Reviews

# Intellect and Intelligence in Modern Society

**Gerald Popiel**

IT is the global scope of this volume * which impresses the reader most strongly. The polyglot contributors are, to be sure, confined to Europeans and Americans, but they write not only of Europe and the USA but also of the present emergence of an " intelligentsia " in Africa and elsewhere. The diversity and conflict of views of what the phenomenon is and of the conditions with which it is associated present the reader with the opportunity of achieving greater clarification than he might from a single contribution or from authors with a similar background.

The volume's title refers to a distinction dear to the heart of the editor, but the valiant efforts of the one Czech and the two Polish contributors to clarify the conception of the " intelligentsia " as a group forming itself in connexion with specific historical and social developments in Eastern Europe, are not matched by other contributions, so many of which are haunted by Karl Mannheim's definition which robs the " intelligentsia " of its original East European meaning, and promotes confusion of the two concepts. Even Dr Lopata, whose father (Florian Znaniecki) was an outstanding representative of an intellectual bred in the soil of the Polish intelligentsia, shows lack of precision regarding the distinction. On the other hand, the discussion of the diversity of norms governing intellectual activity in different societies is not well balanced. The most accurate picture of what an intellectual is comes (in spite of stylistic obscurity) from the pen of the Hungarian, Tibor Huszar, whose contribution is, however, marred by too great a concern with linking intellectuals to the bourgeois order as its product. This leads him to ignore the distinction between the intellectuals *in* the bourgeois order and the intellectuals *of* the bourgeois order. But Huszar, it must be remembered, occupies an official position in Hungary.

THE concept " intellectual " emerged at a specific stage of Western history. The word was coined only at the end of the nineteenth century, indicating public recognition that a role had come into existence which was different from that of thinkers and artists, men of disciplined and articulate imagination, who had existed in all ages. Intellectuals, on the other hand, came to enjoy unprecedented freedom in conceptualizing

* *The Intelligentsia and the Intellectuals*, ed. Alexander Gella (Sage Studies in International Sociology, 1977).

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reality, a freedom which was associated with the emergence of the bourgeois order, the disintegration of the traditional order and the onset of disenchantment. As the *consensus universalis* began to lose its grip upon Western society (a process which began with the Reformation and accelerated as kings' heads rolled off their necks in Western Europe), not only did the conceptualizers multiply at an unprecedented rate but so did the diversity of their views; they achieved an independence they had not enjoyed since the days of ancient Greece. No longer dependent upon patronage, they developed a market mentality, for markets arose not only in the sphere of material commodities but also, and indeed above all increasingly, in the sphere of ideas. The rise of intellectuals cannot be dissociated from the opportunity created by the liberal-bourgeois order to find a public, a new and increasingly important force. This nameless and protean entity was much more suggestible and easily managed than patrons like the Church or the princes, while at the same time it could protect and support the intellectual and give him spiritual comfort. The complex relationship between intellectuals and the public is nowhere adequately discussed in the volume. With the collapse of consensus and the erosion of the mystical sources of legitimacy (which is tantamount to saying: with the erosion of legitimacy itself) under the onslaught of empirical science, the producer of ideas could not only find a public, he could also create it, especially since modernity was marked by social change and cultural instability.

That is quite possibly the reason why the *inteligent* rather than the intellectual—a distinction which is the key contribution of this volume—played a leading role in the cultural life of Poland. Poland has resisted the processes of disenchantment with a success that has its parallel in modern times only in Ireland and in ancient times with the Jews in the time of Augustus and Tiberius. In Polish the same word—*inteligencja*—signifies the group and the mental faculty. The use of words constitutes clues to the psychic substance of social reality. Intellect and intelligence: the volume suggests that these faculties may each be exercised with different degrees of intensity in different regions of Europe.

"The intellectual" signifies a role originally associated with the untrammelled use of intellect, the removal of limits upon conceptual thought, the emergence of publics, and the market mentality. Thus a da Vinci was not an intellectual, but a Voltaire was already acting a good bit like one. To be an intellectual is to play a role that is time and place bound, a fact that is not sufficiently appreciated by American contributors to the volume whose historical sensibility is so often restricted to the liberal order. To say, as one of the contributors does, that the intellectuals' kingdom is not of this world is an insight rooted in feudal sensibility, and he develops it with the invidious assertion that intellectuals live a life which is in opposition to the realism of the masses. What he is seeking to convey is that in taking over the place

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of the clergy they took over some of its vocation. The spring of the intellectuals' devotion to reason and justice, to promoting humanity's moral and spiritual progress, lies then in the sacred vocation of the Roman clergy, and not in the profanation of vocation and sanctification of duty to the task-master introduced by Puritanism.

The French are not only the original formulators of the term "intellectual," but, as is so often true of linguistic innovators, breeders of the species itself. On the other hand, the French rarely make use of the term "intelligentsia," probably because they do not scorn their intellectuals, and above all because in France the tendency for the intellectuals to form a "stratum" asserts itself the least. The French intellectuals' power bears a relation to their idealistic devotion, and when that devotion becomes corrupted, by virtue of the very lucidity which is its gift, they become attached to vested interests rather than to each other, and so show the least tendency to form a stratum. The contrary is true of the intelligentsia, which constitutes a stratum in its most complete form, being held together by a unifying type of devotion: devotion to a sense of national responsibility. Perhaps that is why there are few analytical references in the volume to France except with regard to origins, and why there is no contributor from that country. A Raymond Aron would be welcome among them. If Poland and Russia are the classical seats of the intelligentsia, France is the classical land of the intellectuals.

ONE indeed wishes that the volume established the axis between the uses of the intellect and the historical role of the intellectuals more firmly, and it is in French literature that this is most likely to be found. Lipset and Basu make an attempt to distinguish between intellect and intelligence, but succeed better in describing how differently these functions work than in establishing the principle of the difference. They conclude, with Schumpeter, that "intellect is inherently alienated," indicating that they regard separation between intellect and intelligence as the psychological norm. But is it?

The alienation of the intellect is a condition which, for example, confuses—as do Lipset and Basu—innovation with originality and creativity. The intellect's function is mind examining itself and acting upon itself in order to control its processes for the achievement of lucidity (something it cannot do unless integrated with intelligence). The alienated intellect is capable of brilliance but lacks the capacity for overcoming bias and prejudice. Intelligence, on the other hand, is the capacity to perceive real relationships among things, that is, the achievement of insight. The integration of intellect and intelligence has been in fact the great norm of French culture which Descartes articulated and which Voltaire practised. The English Victorian writer, Viscount Morley, in his volume on Voltaire stated that "to Voltaire reason and humanity were but a single word, and love of truth and passion for justice but one emotion." This could also serve as a definition of

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conditions of creativity. Voltaire was no mere innovator. He was, of course, still a thinker and an artist, not an intellectual, for in that period lucidity had not as yet destroyed in French culture the sense of a transcendental order.

Two centuries later Julien Benda stressed the need for a similar attitude of disinterested love of truth and justice. Mannheim's assumption that intellectuals are governed by a Utopian mentality and a tendency towards ideological thinking, which pervades the contributions to Gella's volume both of Ludz of Munich and of Feuer of Virginia, raises disturbing questions. Is this a statement of an actual historical fact, or is this a statement of a norm? In fact it is not a universal attitude. What was treason in France was legitimate enterprise in Germany. Benda's *La Trahison des Clercs* (recently reissued in France) and his denunciation of the tendency among intellectuals to serve vested interests and ideology caused a great deal of stir at the time of its original publication. Could it be that Benda like an Old Testament prophet was articulating a norm of French culture which he saw as being widely violated by French intellectuals? Emile Durkheim's statement that the aim of science is to improve reality as well as to study it, and that good and evil are not a matter of indifference to science, was not far removed from Benda's stand at one point of French history or from Morley's description of Voltaire's at another. Such a stand could not be taken by "alienated intellect."

A few decades before Benda's *La Trahison des Clercs*, Max Weber wrote his *Wissenschaft als Beruf* in which he expounded the stand of ethical neutrality as the condition of scientific objectivity, legitimizing the "technization" of science and its availability for use by ideological and other vested interests. Yet what was a norm to Weber was corruption to Benda, just as the tendency to Utopian thinking is sheer folly to Claude Levi-Strauss. Both Comte and Durkheim saw lucidity rather than detachment ("alienated intellect" helped to lead to the Buchenwalds, Vorkutas and Hiroshimas) as the condition of objectivity. Feuer in the volume quotes with approval Brunetière's ridicule, in connection with the Dreyfussards' protests, of an astronomer or a linguist representing the conscience of society. The prominence of atomic and other physical scientists among Russian dissidents makes Brunetière's ridicule questionable. Habits of rational thinking do break the bounds of specialization, and the protests against the horrors of Utopia in Russia came not from sociologists but rather from physical scientists and from those most rational of all scientists, mathematicians. Feuer confuses knowledge with understanding. A first-rate physicist's powers of understanding do not stop at the limits of his field.

Max Weber stated in his influential essay that a political scientist's duty is to analyse a political system but not to guide his audience in its preferences. No wonder the German universities behaved as they did during the Nazi era. If prediction is part of scientific analysis, then

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any competent behavioural scientist should have foreseen the implications for civilization of the barbaric motivation of the Nazi movement. Does the scientist, following Weber's admonition, stop his prediction at the point when it might influence the choices of his audience? And if he does, is he obeying the call of scientific integrity or of bureaucratic caution and personal safety? After all, there are physicians who stop their diagnosis at the point when it might disturb the patient and his family, and they are not among the least successful in the profession. The stand of ethical neutrality, in fact, opened German science itself to ideologization and eventual " technization " (or destruction). The experiments carried on in concentration camps by Nazi " scientists," guided by their ideology, were remarkably sterile scientifically. And there was Lysenko and his like in the Soviet Union.

THE volume's chief merit lies in bringing together contributions from different societies remarkable for the diversity of their conceptions of intellectuals. The particularism of cultures composing Western civilization is in evidence as well as the universalist claims of some of them, but the *minora gentium* are far more conscious of their local character.

In their " Beyond the Melting Pot " Glazier and Moynihan conclude that the American experiment has not produced a melting pot, a *Homo Americanus*. This failure is reflected in the intellectual sphere where it has produced a syncresis rather than a synthesis, a good indication that the value systems of the different European cultures are in fact difficult to mix on American soil.

Lipset and Basu in their essay on the attitude of the intellectuals towards political power lose their grip on space and history; they display a tendency towards over-generalization, and their specific examples are very often taken out of their historical and cultural context. The two authors' main thesis of " antipathy between political power and intellectuals " cannot be sustained for thinkers of all ages, much less for intellectuals when we understand them as competitors in the market of ideas. Was Machiavelli antipathetic to the use of political power? Or were the ideologues of the various modern political movements, from Marx to Sorel and Gentile? Was not Trotsky an intellectual? Or Churchill? Or Disraeli? Was not Roosevelt's Brain Trust composed of intellectuals? Poets in the Latin world become ambassadors without undergoing paroxysms of conscience, like the celebrated Jorge Isaacs of Colombia in the nineteenth century, or Paul Claudel in our own, who regarded his official duties as a diplomat as " *une obligation de conscience.*"

In their second major thesis Lipset and Basu assert the intellectuals' idealism, " their seemingly inherent tendency to criticize the existing institutions from the vantage point of the desirable, ideal conceptions which are thought to be universally applicable." This is close enough to " the intellectuals' motivation being opposed to the

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realism of the masses." But then they seek to answer the question: "how can an industrially advanced society win the allegiance of intellectuals?" "Bread (which has been amply provided) is not enough." Good. That still leaves to the intellectuals their idealism, but then the initial idealistic image shifts into a sharp contrast. What our authors think the intellectuals miss is "access to court of glory, Camelot." So, we are, after all, down to the level of appetites.

On the subject of the intelligentsia as such Lipset and Basu have little to say; they drop the intelligentsia, after initially distinguishing it from the intellectuals, never to return to it again. Because they ignore the processes which indicate that the violation of the human norm in the orders set up by revolutions has gone beyond the sufferance of many, they cannot entertain the possibility that the order perhaps cannot repair itself within the framework of its own values or that the intelligentsia comes from outside that order.

The article by Lipset and Basu is rich, sophisticated, filled with references, abundant with quotations, while the Soviet contribution is simple-minded, almost austere in its reliance upon an explicit doctrine, naïve and arid: but according to both contributions the only social processes in which the intellectuals need to find their place in the future are in the processes of technocratization and bureaucratization. They have nothing to say about the resistance which the human self in its sense of violation has to offer to them; neither do they have anything to say about the role in which this might involve the intellectual and the humanistic intelligentsia, as it took form in Eastern Europe.

Consider a pre-bourgeois society like pre-war Poland, take its intelligentsia. Its far-reaching secularization did not rob it of its role as leader of movements of social reconstruction, guided by humanistic values, resisting that breaking-up of the bond between man and man which Winston Churchill so correctly predicted would be the horror following the horror of World War II. And this is the only reason—and a very adequate reason it is—why we should pay attention to it. What gave it that special character? It was a charismatic group with a common ethos derived from the values of the landed gentry and endowed with a sense of responsibility for the preservation of national identity. This characteristic is missed by most Western analysts in the volume. It accounts for the special motivation of Polish intellectuals bred in that patriotic group (as most of them were): unlike their French counterparts, they were prone to a class-like consciousness and style of living, and careful of national interest; unlike some of the American intellectuals, they remained to a remarkable degree immune to "the realism of the masses"; their exalted sense of responsibility should not be confused with the interest in "interpreting the world to society," a task-orientation which far from being universal (Mannheim, Ludz), is peculiar rather to German intellectuals, who lack charisma as a group, but are possessed by a sense of vocation and respon-

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sibility for carrying out their tasks; they were recruited from different strata of the population whose values they were likely to retain.

THE editor has set himself a threefold aim: (1) to make it possible for the reader to capture from the polyglot contributions the time- and space-bound condition of the rise of the *intellectuals* and the *intelligentsia* in the different countries and the interrelatedness of the phenomenon; (2) to bring out the contrast in the conception of *intellectuals* and *intelligentsia;* (3) to clarify the phenomenon of the "intelligentsia," to pinpoint it in time and place, and to bring out its relevance to the contemporary situation.

The volume succeeds in bringing out the phenomenon of the "intelligentsia" better than that of the intellectuals, its distinctive original character, a badly-needed task, even if T. Huszar's contribution is marred by overreliance upon Marxist conceptions. From Eastern Europe the word has entered the vocabulary of Western languages with half-articulated and ambiguous overtones. It is often enough used derisively in England and the United States to underline the alien, and so to say, superfluous, non-functional character of those groups, the affectations of their aspirants.

The editor and the East European contributors are at pains to anchor the existence of this formation to specific conditions of Polish and Russian social development since the middle of the nineteenth century. The Soviet writers are an exception to this. They sent in an official report, not an analysis; they ignore the original character of the "intelligentsia," and use the term with deliberate vagueness. To designate thus mental workers grouped under a bureaucratic regimen —there is a method in this. The original Russian intelligentsia was a revolutionary group under the influence of outside ideas, and there is officially no place for such a group in the Soviet system, even if the dissidents act in a typically "intelligentsia" fashion. In Poland especially, the intelligentsia is threatened with extinction, and yet at the same time conditions have appeared which make for its resurrection. It was a group which took over the charisma of a shattered ruling class, sublimated its unique spirit—that of "gentry democracy" —and carried it on irrespective of material conditions, from the sense of being chief guardian of an endangered national spirit and of an inheritance which brought with it the responsibility for redeeming the errors of the past. It was also a group which embodied in it *spiritualization* of resistance to an alien effort to obliterate national identity, and at the same time a guilt-ridden and redemptory attitude towards the national interest, and towards the peasants and working classes in particular. In the spiritual basis of its consciousness it constituted a living refutation of Marxist materialism. It was pervaded with the protective attitudes of pastoral paternalism, which harmonized with those of the Roman Church. It did not speak in the name of the people as the Russian intelligentsia did, but it spoke on their behalf.

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The Polish intelligentsia bore features of a more universal significance. It carried on the tradition of the personal, vital humanism of the Renaissance. In the days when it was on the wane in the West that kind of straight-backed, clear-eyed unsentimental humanism moved by curiosity, by a playful ego seeking to master the world, and by a kind of sensuous hunger, was still alive in that remote corner of Europe. The intelligentsia could produce some remarkable men, prodigies of exuberance, *joie de vivre,* generous charm, wit, fancy, elegance, gallantry, erudition, exquisite conviviality, loyalty, and above all disinterested enthusiasm and devotion to ideals, qualities which were disappearing in the West in the struggle of a competitive society dedicated to a relentless pursuit of progress. The *inteligent* had his intellectual roots in the Renaissance and in Voltaire rather than in the bourgeois ideologies of revolutions and Karl Marx.

THE perusal of this volume stimulated this reader to conclude that the intellectual and the "intelligentsia" belong to opposite ends of the spectrum although both are involved in the same process of secularization, in which we can see the waves of influence crossing back and forth, causing different forms of intellectualism to arise in different societies. "*Les clercs*" in France, in the process of managing their newly found freedom from Church dogma, grouped themselves at first in salons as circles of "*philosophes*" and "*ecrivains*" under the patronage of cultivated and witty ladies, where the French passion for conversation mounted that wind of concepts, which—as the bourgeois society finally emerged—eventually picked up liberal and positivist-constructivist philosophies as well as philosophies of social revolution and social justice. The term "intellectual" itself was born in the Dreyfus affair when a force which had been maturing since the Enlightenment now made itself palpable with three thousand signatures. But it was a *force* rather than a *stratum* or a *class*, atomized by devotion to reason and realism, which showed the capacity to become united only on an occasion when the viability of Truth and Justice became endangered on the national scale as happened in the Dreyfus affair. It was then that Benda made his debut.

Reaching Germany, that wind of concepts bred ideologues and philosophers who created the myth of German nationalism (quite different from patriotism), and devoted themselves, as knowledge became secularized, to their new tasks: those of interpreting the world to the public, of instructing it and enlarging their own self-consciousness and that of other groups in their society with that extraordinary capacity for in-depth self-analysis which marks the German intellect. Their task-orientation, with its roots in the Protestant concept of vocation (Max Weber),[1] united them into a kind of stratum (although

[1] That is, of being called to their profane tasks by God, and of success as a sign of God's grace.

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void of the charisma and roots in a specific mode of conduct which characterized the Polish intelligentsia).

Reaching Eastern Europe it revitalized shattered fragments of the old ruling class of landed gentry, creating a system of secularized education centred on gymnasia, facilitating the metamorphosis of its *noblesse* into the intellectualized and redemptory charisma of the dispossessed "intelligentsia." [2] Both Polish authors make this point, as well as make out a good case for the contention that the term is of Polish rather than Russian origin, that this is where the "intelligentsia" was to be found in its classic form. The "intelligentsia" consists of *inteligenci,* not of "intellectuals." The independent nature of the formation is borne out by the fact that the term "intelligentsia," in fact, arose nearly half a century before the term "intellectual." As mentioned earlier, in Polish the same word is used for the group and for the mental faculty. That is a sociologically and psychologically significant fact particularly when taken against the background of such statements as "the intellect is inherently alienated." In Eastern Europe, intellectuals, being rooted in the spiritualized intelligentsia rather than in interest groups as in the West, helped to keep intellect integrated with intelligence; if anything, the stress was on the development of intelligence.

Even if the intelligentsia was originally rooted in a class, this does not mean that it was not eventually recruited from different groups. It was far more open than the old gentry, being accessible to lower classes. Most important, historically, was its opening to the Jews, who played an eminent role in it, particularly in bringing in liberal and positivist Western influences into Polish culture, and in intellectualizing its modern expression. The presence of the intelligentsia was of great significance in the accommodation of Jews in Poland in modern times. This subject is not developed in the volume. In view of the closed and sacred character of Polish society, the intelligentsia made possible the existence of a paradox: the full-scale participation in high Polish culture, and through it, contact with Western culture, of a select group of Jews who could still retain their ties to the ethos of Judaism. While anti-semitism, springing from internal sources and also being fanned from the outside, assumed ever more intense forms, promoting a stereotype of the Jew composed of mythical features as well as of the features of the most debased elements of unassimilated Polish Jewry, the intelligentsia opened the way for the ambitious and the curious, without confronting them with the necessity of forfeiting the basic values of Judaism. They were watching with sadness the deformations, both physical and spiritual, which were the inevitable consequences of ghetto life, and the more external and primitive forms of discrimination and persecution to which the high visibility of

[2] Alexander Hertz's "The Case of an East European Intelligentsia," *Journal of Central European Affairs,* 11, is basic to an understanding of the historic relationship between the gentry and the intelligentsia in Poland.

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ritual-clinging Jews was exposing them. Yet Judaism is spirit, not form. The way out was secularization, either into Zionism or into assimilation and acculturation, and the secularized intelligentsia of all the groups in Poland was the best-fashioned for the second recourse, for it made it possible for the wordly Jews to abandon the confinement and deformations of the ghetto without abandoning the greater part of its solidarity. The practising side of Zionism, with its pioneer orientation, did not appeal to the sophisticated or the prosperous, although many of them were willing enough in the face of rising anti-semitism to support it in theory and with money.

The intelligentsia offered to these Jews access to the values of a group which curiously harmonized with worldly Judaism: a paternalistic charisma, a fierce sense of mission and responsibility, claims to ascendancy among its people on spiritual rather than power grounds, emphasis upon continuity. The intelligentsia, further, cherished an individual independence of judgment and was imbued with altruistic idealism, a transcendent God not altogether dead in the hearts of its members. Also, like the Jews, the intelligentsia suffered from a victim complex, and relied upon appeal to a sense of justice rather than of power among nations in defending their people, whose fate it saw as a symbol of oppression and injustice. It was possible to be an *inteligent,* and thus enter the mainstream of Polish, and with it of contemporary Western culture, without ceasing to be a Jew.

Another attraction was that in a land attached to the rituals and superstitions of Catholicism, the intelligentsia took their religion in a more sublimated form, and tended, if anything, to distil it into an attitude of *pastoral paternalism.* What went with that was that just like the Jews, it was imbued with a strong sense of its own legitimacy. Sacramental Christianity shares with Judaism this fundamental attitude. It is well to remember that that quintessential worldly Jew, Disraeli, was a sincere and devoted protagonist of the sacramental order of Anglicanism. Voltaireanism too, with its cry against *l'Infame,* which was not God but the corruption of the Church, would have greater appeal to the Jews in the end than Marxism with its hatred of transcendental religion as such.

Entry into the intelligentsia produced few spiritual conflicts for the worldly Jews. Its life style and norms were congenial to them. Many became masters of Polish culture, and indeed in modern Poland the Jews rose to play an important part in the cultural life of the nation. They assimilated as a group, and kept to themselves in their intimate life—as they had done in Spain, for example—forming an essential part of the Polish intelligentsia. They abandoned the rituals and forms which Judaism had evolved in diaspora but not necessarily its spirit, while the reverse, if anything, was true of the German Jews. At the same time the affinity of norms created possibilities of contact between individual Polish and Jewish *inteligenci*; intense friendships, far-reaching spiritual exchanges and personal involvements with each other

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were rife in spite of mounting hostility between the two groups, as if the affinities were the profounder and the antagonisms the more superficial force once the spirit of the two peoples asserted itself in sublimated form.

For all that, the *inteligenci* of Jewish background found themselves in a far more precarious position than their unassimilated brethren. Many among the Polish *inteligenci* were moved by the force of nationalism and by the imported myths against the Jews, and especially against the Jewish *inteligenci.* The rise of the Jews in the cultural life of the nation produced a contradiction: the greater the assimilation the more intense the anti-semitism which rose to its highest pitch against the most assimilated Jews as the real menace, the subtle corrupters of Polish culture. In the interwar period there were persecutions and restrictions in the universities, there was exclusion from governmental work and from positions of trust or representation, there was social ostracism. Still the idealism of the Polish intelligentsia was sufficiently intense to make anti-semitism itself abhorrent to some and to some others a matter of policy rather than a guide to personal conduct.

Structured as it was by a spiritual bond the intelligentsia was open to the *arriviste* on the condition that he accommodate himself to the ethos derived from that of the old gentry. This brings forth an important fact. While the intellectuals are associated with the emergence of the bourgeois society, the intelligentsia emerges in a society where the bourgeoisie is weak. Inasmuch as *the bourgeoisie constitutionally lacks charisma as a class,* while the intelligentsia is a charismatic group that feels itself charged with responsibility for the destiny and wellbeing of the nation, in the main it looked down upon the bourgeoisie and kept itself apart from it while it felt affinity for the charismatic aristocracy. The secularization of education which formed a new functional basis for the dispossessed gentry created a milieu open to ideas from societies where secularization of intellect had been more complete, and the new stratum incorporated those ideas in its vision of an improved society and of a strengthened nation. Those ideas were to be the means whereby to correct the "errors and vices" of the past. But the *inteligenci* took upon themselves not only the responsibility for the "excesses" of the "forefathers," but also the sense of guilt that went with it. This reflects a fundamental characteristic of that group, a characteristic without which its charisma would not be possible, its emphasis on the *continuity* between generations; this, incidentally, was another reason for the affinities between the Polish and Jewish members of the intelligentsia. Such a class of people cannot flourish in societies stressing the generation gap. The classical model of the intelligentsia constitutes a stratum which is the heir of a class where continuity between generations is a paramount value and makes possible the passing on of a sense of responsibility from one to another.

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It was true of both the Polish and the Russian intelligentsia that they looked to the West as the place where civilized progress was being made. But it was the Polish intelligentsia in particular which took over from the decaying landed gentry its feudal values of honour, loyalty, and disinterested devotion, together with the attachment to individual independence of opinion that had been the most precious privilege of gentry democracy, as well as the refinement of sentiment and sensibility which marked its aspirations to equality with the best. That is, the intelligentsia was a stratum of educated people marked by adherence to a code and a style of living rather than to the intellectual function. The old Catholic gentry in Poland did not encourage development of intellect.

The gymnasium played a key role in the metamorphosis of charisma. Unlike schools in Western societies it did not seek merely to sharpen the intellect or prepare for a professional career or, as in the case of the English public schools, shape character for a governing role, but it sought to test the charisma of its pupils as well. In the old times in Poland when a man displayed qualities of *noblesse* he received a patent of nobility. The possession of similar qualities in Poland from the middle of the 19th century was an important condition of his passage through the gymnasium. The student who knew his material but failed to display fine sensibility and sentiment, was considered an outsider; he might become a highly qualified professional man; he would not be regarded as an *inteligent*; furthermore, even his motives as a professional man would be regarded as questionable. On the other hand, the diploma gave him a permanent status which did not depend upon his achievements. This is revealed in a trivial custom. In both Poland and Czechoslovakia a man's professional title was applied to his wife as well.

THERE are important differences between the Polish and the Russian intelligentsia, and the volume edited by Gella helps to make us aware of them. Before the partitions, the Polish gentry, an exceptionally numerous group, had been the ruling class of Poland. The monarchy had not succeeded in challenging its powers, and thus its privileges and responsibilities, its status in general, had become *inalienable*. The gentry's attitudes were egalitarian, and the poorest landowner regarded himself the equal of the greatest magnate, and as a result aspired to his manners and attitudes. Conversely, the aristocracy affected or adopted the rougher manners of the gentry who forced upon them their " brotherliness," which, for political reasons, they had to accept. In consequence the average Polish aristocrat did not attain the refinements or preciousness of manners and tastes of his peers in England, or even in Russia, much less in France.

The spirit of gentry democracy, carried on by the intelligentsia, marks indelibly the core of the Polish national character without which Polish national identity would perish, just as autocracy and orthodoxy

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mark the spirit of Russia. Because of this, Poland would never have gone on its own through the bourgeois revolution. The numerousness of its ruling class has been the decisive factor in the evolution of Polish history. After the Jagellonians the monarchy had never been strong enough to build up a strong bourgeoisie as a counterbalance to the nobility. The political weakness of the monarchy had caused the blame for political and national misfortune to fall upon the magnates and the gentry, not upon the king. The monarchical principle has never been as discredited in Poland as it was in the West; her most glorious days were identified with the Renaissance kings, the Jagellonians. The Polish gentry was foreign to the conflict between class interests and patriotism in which the Russian nobility was involved. For the latter, resentment of autocracy was coupled with the realization that autocracy was the condition of the preservation of the huge land mass which constitutes Great Russia. We find this conflict in both Pushkin and Dostoevsky. The Russian intelligentsia inherited it. Today Solzhenitsyn thinks of tsardom when he thinks of an alternative to the horrors of Utopia.

The dispossessed members of the Russian gentry whose status had been the tsar's gift and alienable at his will were being crushed by the fist of the autocracy into a faceless, classless mass, while the Polish intelligentsia, rooted in the spirit of a class whose status was inalienable, identified itself, for all its dispossession, with the legitimate ascendancy of that element, and at the same time showed lack of concern for attributes of material status which had nothing to do with asceticism or Bohemianism. It was rather the pride of charisma. Thus the Polish intelligentsia was endowed with a sense of legitimacy and it relied upon appeal to history in leading rebellion against autocracy, while the Russian intelligentsia lacked that sense, and spoke instead in the name of the will of the people. In consequence, the Polish intelligentsia had a strong capacity for religious faith as well as piety, while the Russian intelligentsia was receptive to atheism (Russian autocracy was also supreme in the Orthodox Church) and to the appeals of the absurd.

While the spirit of the Russian intelligentsia (after the *raznochintsy*) was largely plebeian, the spirit of the Polish intelligentsia remained aristocratic. As one contributor points out, the Polish intelligentsia in its social gatherings sought to rival the style and manner of aristocratic salons while, as another contributor points out, the Russian intelligentsia often adopted rather crude manners. This aristocratic flair of the Polish intelligentsia produces misleading impressions in the Anglo-Saxon world. Bertrand Russell referred to Joseph Conrad, who came from the upper ranks of the gentry, as a Polish aristocrat, while Zbigniew Brzezinski, who comes from a typically intelligentsia background, is regularly referred to in this way in the American daily press. While the Russian intelligentsia fought against the monarchy, trying to create a new principle of sovereignty, the will of the people, the Polish intelligentsia, on the contrary, fought for the restoration of

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legitimacy, though not necessarily exclusive of the monarchical principle, in the name of Polish history. After all, the Polish monarchy fell together with national independence, and it was that event, and not class struggle, which loomed large in the Polish sensibility.

"Autocracy" and "the masses" are the two terms of the Russian synthesis. But while the fist of the tsar could dispossess the Polish gentry it could not atomize them, it could not crush them into a mass. Polish society is the society least likely to be massified. This is illustrated by an example cited by Gella. When the communist government in Poland decreed in a typical attempt to ordain society's mores by fiat that everybody was to use the address which in French is "*vous*," hitherto used by the lower classes, in place of "*pan*" (or "sir") used by the gentry and the "intelligentsia," everybody, including the peasants, began instead to use the latter, more dignified, form. This indicates the degree to which the spirit of Polish culture, for other classes as well, is involved in the outlook transmitted from the gentry and by the intelligentsia.

In the main, the Polish intelligentsia had the psychology of rebellion but not of revolution. One of the best summaries of the anti-revolutionary, anti-Utopian attitudes of that group is given by Joseph Conrad. In several of his works that writer expresses his contempt for both the autocracy and the revolutionaries, including the Utopian mentality. The following statement from *Under Western Eyes,* written before the First World War, sums up the attitude of the Polish intelligentsia even today:

> the ferocity and imbecility of an autocratic rule rejecting all legality and in fact basing itself upon complete moral anarchism provokes the no less imbecilic answer of a purely Utopian Revolutionism, encompassing destruction by the first means to hand, in the strange conviction that a fundamental change of heart must follow the downfall of any given institution.

Russian culture having been greatly influenced by Byzantium and partly orientalized, the impact of Western ideas alienated the Russian intelligentsia from it. This explains Tolstoy's attitude: the frenchified nobility were culturally alienated and functionally superfluous in the framework of pre-revolutionary Russian society. It was the masses, the peasants who were the reality. Again we encounter here the polarity of the masses and the autocracy.

Poland, on the other hand, has always considered itself an outpost of the West, has been Rome-oriented, falling under the spell of the Renaissance to the extent of producing a scientist whose revolutionary concepts regarding the place of the earth in the universe helped to usher in the modern era. Therefore, Western ideas did not alienate the Polish intelligentsia from its culture, an important reason why that stratum never developed a Utopian-ideological mentality as a characteristic mode of thinking. This difference between Poland and

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Russia has a great deal to do with the inability to start in Poland a revolution based upon mass support and the success of such a revolution in Russia. The alienated Russian intelligentsia and its intellectuals in particular showed a tendency towards a Utopian-revolutionary mentality.

THIS makes understandable the Soviet contribution which otherwise must raise a frown or perhaps a smile from the Western reader. The style makes it stand out from the other papers in the volume, which conform to the usual standards of scholarly presentation. It does not even make an attempt in that direction; it is frankly ideological, with a kind of barbaric naïvety. The general posture of the article is one of desperate affirmation. Bokarev and Chaplin of the Institute of Sociological Research in Moscow show such an ignorance of the expectations of empirical sociologists in the West that they seem to have blundered into the volume, thrust in by some mischievous hand to raise a laugh.

They begin, as an official memorandum should, by referring to the statement of the ruling body. They themselves reflect the connection between Utopianism and orthodoxy, for what can be more Utopian as well as orthodox than to assume, as they do, that for the congress of the Party to state an objective is tantamount to its being achieved, and that there is no need to prove this. We need not be surprised, therefore, when they assume that since Russia is governed in accordance with the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism, it follows that no fundamental problems can arise. Since the theory does not provide, for example, for the rise of dissidents in the Soviet Union, the two authors fiercely deny the existence of dissidents in the Soviet Union. It is all just Western propaganda. They show a lack of self-consciousness and of concern for other ways of thinking that is almost disarming. They denounce, for example, intellectuals serving the monopolistic bourgeoisie, but it does not occur to them that the Western reader may not be able to perceive a substantial difference in principle between serving the bourgeoisie and serving the Party. They speak as servants of a doctrine whose built-in sociological weakness is that, unlike revealed dogma, it claims validity on logico-empirical grounds, and as such, invites criticism from the very same group which adopted it. The phenomenon of the dissident is, in fact, contrary to the two writers' assumptions, inevitable. "The working intelligentsia" is the only intelligentsia they are prepared to recognize but a "working," that is a conformist "technical" intelligentsia, whose membership is defined by tasks, is a contradiction in terms.

FOR Professor Gella the significance of the phenomenon of the "intelligentsia" lies in its involvement in discontent and in its direct sense of responsibility for the fate of society. It follows that it might appear in other societies and in other times when conditions occur similar to those which caused the rise of that group in Eastern

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Europe. Following that thesis, " intelligentsias "—as both Professors Hodge and Gella note—are appearing in the Third World as well as in affluent societies and in the Soviet Union. Small groups in Poland and Czechoslovakia are now also beginning to exhibit features of the classical formation. This thesis is also interesting in regard to the affluent West, now that an " educated proletariat " is arising there, open to Utopian ideas and critical of existing structures, which is resisting the technocratic society and the corporate state, and is becoming transformed in the process into a stratum that comes much more closely than German or English or American intellectuals ever have to the prototype of the East European " intelligentsia."

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*Realism in Russian Art*

# Very Much a Russian Story . . .

**Igor Golomstock**

UNTIL now, researchers outside the Soviet Union have shown no special interest in the work of the *Peredvizhniki*—the "Wanderers." Their rebellion against the Academy in 1863 came at a time when the French Impressionists were already flinging down their first aesthetic gauntlet to the Salon, and their ideas of social realism (which bore certain similarities with Courbet's theoretical constructs) came to prevail in Russian artistic life in the 1880s, when Cézanne's work had already begun to overturn Impressionist theories. They had no influence whatsoever on the development of Western art, remaining a purely local, peripheral phenomenon. However, in the Soviet Union there exists a voluminous literature on the subject of the *Peredvizhniki*. Elizabeth Valkenier tells us * that "During the 1940s and 1950s well over half of all the art books published [in the USSR] were devoted to the Peredvizhniki and their movement" (p. 182). In the Stalin years their work was declared "the supreme model in the art of pre-socialist society, which rose to such an unprecedented height, a height to which art had not risen in any other country in the world either before or at that time." [1] The *Peredvizhniki* were viewed as ardent revolutionaries developing the ideas of Chernyshevsky, Herzen, Pisarev and Dobrolyubov, as opponents of and martyrs to the tsarist regime, as selfless defenders of the oppressed people. Soviet historians claim that it was the *Peredvizhniki* who, in the first post-revolutionary years, took the side of the Soviet regime as the founders of a genuinely revolutionary, proletarian, socialist art. Although during the last 20 years Soviet historiography has been enriched with a number of works which make timid attempts to restore the *Peredvizhniki* to their rightful place in Russian artistic culture, to this day the mass Soviet consciousness continues to regard them as some sort of yardstick of revolutionary realism measuring up to the highest aesthetic standards.

*Russian Realist Art*, subtitled *The State and Society: The Peredvizhniki and Their Tradition*, by the American historian Elizabeth Valkenier, is a serious and scholarly exploration based on the painstaking study of an enormous amount of historical material, including Soviet archives. Nothing could be further removed from the passion of political condemnation. Yet by her very method of objective

* Elizabeth Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art. The State and Society: The Peredvizhniki and Their Tradition* (Ardis/Ann Arbor, 1977).

[1] Anthology, *Voprosy teorii sovetskogo izobrazitelnogo iskusstva* (Moscow, 1950), pp. 29–30.

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analysis of the facts, the author peels off layer after successive layer of the Soviet myth about the *Peredvizhniki*, baring the core of historical truth. Possibly this is the most interesting and most valuable aspect of the book.

In her introduction the author expounds her aim and defines the parameters of her investigation:

> The nexus between society, politics and art—rather than aesthetic evaluation—interests me as a historian: it is at the crux of what is unique about the Russian art scene, under both tsars and commissars. What realism signified, and how it related to society when it first was an antagonist and eventually an ally of the regime, is very much a Russian story, an experience that was not repeated elsewhere in Europe.

THIS is indeed "very much a Russian story," for nowhere else in Europe have relations between the state and society, society and art, over the last century and a half presented a picture of such close ideological symbiosis as has been the case in Russia. Not only the various revolutionary democrats from Belinsky and Chernyshevsky to the Futurists and Constructivists, but successive rulers of the country as well, firmly believed in the social, transforming force of art—both as a means of overthrowing the foundations of state power and as an instrument of its establishment. From Pushkin's exile, Dostoevsky's penal servitude and the anathema of Tolstoy through to the radical methods of the 1920s and the Stalin-Zhdanov cultural pogroms: the story unfolds with unswerving consistency, only slowing its pace to allow a new generation of rebels to be born—rebels who become the inevitable victims of the former revolutionaries. In this respect the fate of the *Peredvizhniki's* ideas both during their lifetime and thereafter is an organic part and a mirror of Russian history, reflecting the dizzy swings of its historical pendulum.

Using a large amount of factual material, Elizabeth Valkenier shows that the rebellion of the 14 students, which ended in their secession from the Petersburg Academy of Arts, the founding of an artists' artel and seven years later the Association of Travelling Art Exhibits, was not of a socio-political nature. They were simply striving to do what Courbet and the Barbizon painters in France, the German romanticists and the English genre-painters had done long before them—to discard the historical and mythological compositions imposed by the Academy and instead paint the life, customs and face of their own country. Deriving for the most part from the lowest social strata and accordingly lacking in general education, the representatives of this movement were virtually unacquainted with the revolutionary democrats' theories and had little interest in political struggle. Of course, having taken up the portrayal of Russian life, they could not pass by the theme of revolution, but, as Valkenier writes:

> Radical activists were depicted as solitary figures either in prison

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> or under arrest, never among a sympathetic and responsive group. . . . These desperate individuals had the strength of their convictions and actively fought the system they were opposed to, whereas the Peredvizhniki themselves, once also rebellious up to a point, had made their peace and compromised with the system (p. 90).

The *Peredvizhniki* initiated their revolt against the official Academy art during the most liberal years (two years after the emancipation of the serfs), while in the period of "dark reaction" (as Soviet historiography terms the reign of Alexander III) they became the official artists of the regime. This historical paradox has given Soviet researchers much trouble: either they have refrained altogether from mentioning it or they have explained it by secondary factors—internal conflicts between members of the Association, tactical considerations, and so on. Elizabeth Valkenier deduces this transformation from the very essence of *Peredvizhnik* art and links it with the mood of Russian society of the day.

For indeed, while they emerged as revolutionaries in the thematic field, in the sphere of artistic language the *Peredvizhniki* remained profoundly conservative. They had only a vague notion of Western artistic culture, while in Paris they had admired local academicians like Gerôme and Meissonier and regarded with suspicion and hostility the then newly developing trends, Impressionism in particular. Just as alien to them was the language of Russian folk art and Old Russian icon-painting; with no great cultural tradition behind them, they could only create what they did—a narrowly national school of painting, which had not even in the first instance been one of the aims of the members. It was the critic Stasov who perceived the national idea in their work and elevated it into a principle; from the beginning of the 1870s he became the ideologist of *Peredvizhnichestvo*. Having started life with a declaration of the aesthetic significance of the Russian landscape and scenes from popular life, this concept gradually developed into a characteristic affirmation of the originality of Russian realism, of its moral, social and aesthetic superiority over the decadent art of the West. In this version it rang in unison with the prevailing mood of the 1880s. It was a time when the Russo-Turkish war was stimulating an explosion of patriotic, nationalistic, Slavophile and Pan-Slavist ideas. While spokesmen of the democratic (progressive) strata continued to see *Peredvizhnik* paintings as exposures of the vices and ulcers of autocracy, monarchist (reactionary) circles began to perceive in them a poeticization of the national foundations of Russian life. Among the latter was Alexander III, "the most outwardly nationalistic of the last four Russian rulers" (p. 124). The new Tsar became the chief patron of the *Peredvizhniki*. Not only did he buy their paintings, he secured the right of first choice and purchase of their work from exhibitions for a museum of national Russian art founded by himself. He even exerted pressure on his own Academy of Arts (which was then under the authority of the Ministry of the Court),

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replacing its governing body and obliging the new governors to compromise with the *Peredvizhniki* and welcome the lost sheep into their fold. In 1894 Repin, Shishkin, V. Makovsky and Kuindzhi became professors at the Academy, while 12 other *Peredvizhniki* were appointed to its administration. From this point, division of Russian art into the oppositionist line of the *Peredvizhniki* and the official, Academic school becomes meaningless: the popular genre gained a firm foothold within the Academy walls, while the *Peredvizhniki* began to paint coronations of tsars and victories of Russian arms.

ONCE it had become the official art, *Peredvizhnichestvo* correspondingly adopted the protectionist function fulfilled by the Imperial Academy of Arts with regard to Russian artistic culture. Valkenier cites numerous facts testifying to the rigid barriers which the newly-arisen authorities erected in the path of any new phenomenon in Russian art from the 1880s onward. V. Serov's first experiments in *plein-air* painting were bitterly attacked by the *Peredvizhniki.* The works of M. Vrubel, the "Russian genius," were unable to percolate through the dense filter of *Peredvizhnik* juries to exhibitions. The "World of Art" which was transformed at the beginning of the twentieth century into a powerful movement that embraced every sphere of Russian artistic culture, encountered most enmity from the *Peredvizhniki*, who branded its followers as underminers of the foundations of the nation, *poseurs* and decadents, "poor in spirit" and "a colony of lepers" (for thus the chief *Peredvizhnik* ideologist, V. Stasov, entitled his articles attacking the "World of Art"). Within a brief period of time *Peredvizhnichestvo* turned into the most stagnant and conservative force, the chief brake on the development of Russian art and, simultaneously, its aesthetic level fell abruptly. The grandeur of their epic canvases of popular life was lost in tedious sociological emphasis and schoolroom didacticism; social realism degenerated into flat, descriptive naturalism, and all that was most striking and talented deserted the *Peredvizhnik* ranks and went over to the enemy camp. By the 1890s *Peredvizhnichestvo* was moving further and further away from the centre of Russian culture to its periphery and appeared to be retiring for good from the stage of Russian artistic life.

Elizabeth Valkenier devotes the first five chapters of her book to analysing this "life story" of Russian realism. Her two concluding chapters "The *Peredvizhniki* and Revolution" and "The Native Roots of Socialist Realism" depict its "posthumous" fate: the reanimation of its most important ideas and their transformation into a powerful ideological weapon of the totalitarian state.

VALKENIER calls the first post-revolutionary years (1917–22) "The nadir of the *Peredvizhniki* and their tradition" (p. 148). On the one hand:

> Altogether, the conduct of the Association during the 1905 Revolu-

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> tion left such a bad aftertaste that henceforth their critics invariably categorized the *Peredvizhniki* with those parties that sat on the extreme right of the Duma and at times even with the notorious Black Hundreds (p. 139).

On the other hand:

> As for the members of the Association of Travelling Art Exhibits, those who did not emigrate [2] refused to have anything to do with the Bolsheviks. Offered the opportunity to work for the Soviet government, they declined and sulked in moral and political indignation. It is largely because of this boycott, and not because the cultural authorities gave them a *carte blanche*, that the radical Left came to exercise a virtual dictatorship in the administration of the arts (p. 144).

These leftists, who came to power immediately after the October *coup d'état*, were not disposed to forget about the reactionary role the *Peredvizhniki* had played in aesthetics and politics during the two decades before the Revolution. They declared their work bourgeois, hostile to proletarian art and counter-revolutionary. Furthermore, the 1920s were dominated by the Marxist school of sociological art theory which classed realism in general and *Peredvizhnichestvo* in particular as the style of the small property-holding commodity economy, the ideology of the petty bourgeoisie, and even explained their ideological "going to the people" (*khozhdenie v narod*) as motivated by entirely prosaic economic considerations: an effort to win a new market for the sale of their artistic production. Their chances of making their way to power in a society with an ultra-revolutionary ideology were apparently nil.

Notwithstanding all this, as early as 1922 there began a process of revival of the ideas of realism and the *Peredvizhniki* commenced a second rise to supreme authority. The beginning of this process coincided with the physical death of *Peredvizhnichestvo* as an organization; its development may therefore be regarded as an otherworldly phenomenon, a ghostly phantom of the life of the spirit outside the body, the replacement of fact by legend and the supplanting of reality by myth.

In February 1922 the 47th and last exhibition of the Association of Travelling Art Exhibits was held. The debate that accompanied its opening gave birth to the Association of Artists Studying Revolutionary Life, and in May of the same year its members renamed themselves the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia—AKhRR. Former President of the Association of Travelling Art Exhibits P. Radimov became President of the new Association, and most of the *Peredvizhniki* were absorbed into it. Five or so years later the AKhRR had become the most numerous, expansive and influential of all the artistic groups that sprang up like mushrooms in the revolution-watered soil of the 1920s. What is more, this triumphal procession of realism took place in the teeth of active

[2] The leader of the *Peredvizhniki*, I. Repin, found himself in emigration (in Finland). Others, like Bogdanov-Belsky and K. Korovin, left Russia later.

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opposition on the part of Soviet public artistic opinion. As one of the big Party bosses, E. Yaroslavsky, disapprovingly remarked in his speech of welcome to the first AKhRR congress in 1928: "The impression is gained that almost the entire Soviet press is bent on showing hostility toward the AKhRR, that the AKhRR is something anti-Soviet." [3] Nevertheless, 10 years after its foundation the AKhRR won a total victory over its opponents, who included all of Russia's finest artistic forces. The notorious decree of the Bolshevik Central Committee of 23 April 1932 liquidated all artistic groupings in the country, and all key positions in the freshly reconstituted organs of administration and control of artistic life went to former AKhRR members. Finally, "between the purges of 1936 and the German invasion of 1941, the *Peredvizhniki* as a group were rehabilitated to full artistic and political respectability: as such, they were to be the only models for Socialist Realism" (p. 165).

THE reasons behind, and course of, this mysterious upsurge, in the environment of a revolutionary state, of what was aesthetically and politically the most conservative group, have so far been little analysed in world literature. Elizabeth Valkenier rightly sees as the root of the problem the AKhRR's formula of "the artist's productive cooperation with the organs of state power." Guided by their motto of "capturing a supreme moment in history in its revolutionary burst" the AKhRR artists travelled to factories and construction sites, penetrated into the private offices of Party leaders and military commanders, painted portraits of members of the government, and did thematic pictures of the revolution and civil war periods, in the style and using the technique of the *Peredvizhniki*—which they then passed off as creations of the new revolutionary and heroic realism (as Valkenier remarks, if at one of the AKhRR exhibitions someone had replaced the picture "Reading of Lenin's Land Decree" by "Reading of the Emancipation Manifesto"—a picture by the *Peredvizhnik* Myasoedov dating from 1873—nobody would have noticed the substitution). Their studio at this time was in the grounds of the Kremlin; they had permanent access to the top brass. They developed personal relations with Party and government leaders, which they skilfully exploited in order to suppress their opponents' activities. AKhRR artists had in fact left the province of cultural-artistic organizations and put their fate in the hands of top Party circles. All this is an important aspect of the mechanics of their progress to power.

Elizabeth Valkenier looks at the history of the renaissance (or rather, reanimation) of the Russian realistic tradition somewhat in isolation from the real disposition of forces and the battle between them on the artistic front during the first post-revolutionary years. Admittedly, this is a question that goes far beyond the sharply defined limits and aims of the

[3] *Sbornik, "Bor'ba za realizm v iskusstve 20-kh godov"* (Moscow, 1962), p. 158. [Anthology, "The Struggle for Realism in the Art of the 1920s."]

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author's investigation. However, it may be that by restricting herself in this way she has presented a slightly distorted picture of the process. Thus, Valkenier takes the beginning of the process out of the chronological framework of the "liberal," "tolerant," Leninist period of artistic control and dates it from a later point in time. This is perhaps the only place in her book where the author falls prisoner to a ready-made, fixed historical scheme. The facts she cites are those usually cited by both Soviet and Western writers on the subject. They are facts like Lenin's admission (according to Klara Zetkin's memoirs) of his lack of competence in matters of art and his reluctance to interfere with its living practice, or the Central Committee resolution of July 1925 which purported to continue the Leninist line and spoke of the stylistic equivalence of different trends and the impossibility of the leadership's encouraging any of them. Moreover, as evidence of Lenin's negative attitude toward the *Peredvizhniki*, Valkenier cites a list of artists, approved by Lenin himself, who, by way of a monumental propaganda exercise, were to be required to put up statues in Moscow and other cities of the RSFSR: there is not a single representative of the *Peredvizhniki* among them. These are all facts, but facts taken out of the historical context of the time. As for Lenin's utterances and the texts of Party resolutions, we know only too well how often their verbal expression was at variance with the true intentions of their authors. Thus, for instance, the resolution of 1925 did indeed indicate a like attitude towards the different artistic-creative groups, but only a year later representatives of the most prominent artistic groupings addressed a letter to the Party Central Committee asking them to "get rid of the situation in which one artistic group [the AKhRR—I.G.] is being honoured with all the tangible signs of favour, not only expressed in the creation of a material basis for this group but—much more importantly—giving it a moral credit in the eyes of large sections of the Soviet public, which cannot be justified by the cultural-artistic level and the achievements of this group alone."[4] Furthermore, Lenin implemented his cultural policies not so much by way of decrees and resolutions as by means of personal suggestions, office memoranda and telegrams. Most of this material has, naturally, been lost, but a part has been preserved and can perhaps throw a slightly different light on Lenin's "liberality" in matters of cultural politics. In December 1918, for instance, Lenin demanded that Lunacharsky stop the Futurists publishing in the newspaper *Iskusstvo Kommuny* (Art of the Commune),[5] which was then the chief printed organ of the revolutionary Futurists. Four months later the paper was closed down. Lenin was continually reproaching his People's Commissar for his "partiality for the Futurists" and repeatedly insisted on the removal of representatives of the revolutionary *avant-garde* from

[4] *Sbornik, "Sovetskoe iskusstvo za 15 let"* (Moscow, 1933), p. 390. [Anthology, "Soviet Art over 15 Years."]
[5] A. Lunacharsky, *Sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1964), p. 613.

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the leadership of the IZO [Art Section] of the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment. One need only cite the text of Lenin's note to Lunacharsky's deputy, M. N. Pokrovsky, on 6 May 1921: "Lunacharsky has apparently again hounded out Kiselis,[6] who they say is a 'realist' painter, and by hook or by crook put a Futurist in. Can you not find any reliable anti-Futurists?"[7] Moreover, the word "Futurist" then covered not only representatives of a particular group but all opponents of realistic art in general; and it was chiefly the *Peredvizhniki*, the future AKhRR, who were "reliable anti-Futurists." The absence of the *Peredvizhniki* from Lenin's list of artists assigned to monumentalization is no pointer at all to his attitude toward that movement. By their real importance in Russian art, only Repin and Surikov might have claimed a place in the notebook along with Lenin's seven other candidates. But the former was then in emigration while the paintings of the latter ("Yermak's Conquest of Siberia," "Suvorov Crossing the Alps") were too readily and directly associated at the time with the aggressive ideology of Russian imperialism.

None of Lenin's utterances on the subject of the realist-*Peredvizhniki* have been preserved. But we can deduce his attitude toward them from the context of his personality and cultural policy. Like all Russian social-revolutionaries and many Russian social-reactionaries too, Lenin firmly believed in the socially useful (or harmful) transforming function of art (a very Russian characteristic; Churchill, for example, an artist himself, wrote a treatise on art called "Painting as a Pastime"). Once in power, Lenin reduced this function to the agitation and propaganda of his own political ideas. We know how much importance he attached and how much of his tightly packed time he was able to devote to putting into effect his monumental propaganda plan, which official Soviet art still takes as its yardstick to this day. The language of Russian realism, intelligible (or so he thought) to the broad popular masses, was better suited to this aim than were the mind-boggling formal innovations of the revolutionary *avant-garde*. It was this notion of usefulness rather than any aesthetic, moral or even ideological consideration that guided Lenin in his attitude to both the Russian realistic tradition and the opponents of that tradition. Trotsky, writing in 1924, supplied a more candid, albeit more cynical, formulation of the model of this attitude:

> We find such time-servers everywhere, even among portraitists. . . . They paint a Russian or German Bolshevik exactly the same as they would have painted a carafe or a radish for the Academy, and with even greater indifference. I am not naming any names, since they form a whole class. They won't pluck any stars out of the sky or invent gunpowder; but they are useful and necessary and will be the manure for a new culture. And that's not doing too badly.[8]

[6] Kiselis was a mediocre artist and later a prominent figure in AKhRR.

[7] *Literaturnoe nasledstvo. V. I. Lenin i A. V. Lunacharsky, Perepiska, doklady, dokumenty* (Moscow, 1971), p. 714.

[8] Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution* (New York, 1957), p. 37.

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THE rise of realism and the simultaneous decline of the revolutionary *avant-garde*, which had been the "official" art of the young Soviet republic, are two aspects of a single process. As early as 1921 the emigration had begun of the most prominent representatives of leftist art from Russia (among others, Kandinsky, Chagall, A. Pevzner and Naum Gabo departed). Those who remained were ousted from leading positions and deprived of state commissions and the opportunity to work. After 1923 no more exhibitions of *avant-garde* trends were held in Russia. Artistic groups which came into being after that time invariably included the concept of realism, interpreted in one way or another, as an obligatory element in their programmes. This abrupt change of direction meant a radical reorganization of all artistic life in Russia and could not have been accomplished within a single year after Lenin's death. Clearly it had been prepared while Lenin was still in charge and he must have taken a personal share in it. Unfortunately, this factor, which is crucial to an understanding of the Soviet period, remains a blank page in Valkenier's book.

The continuation of this theme is the story of the transmutation of the *Peredvizhnik* tradition into the state ideology of socialist realism, "the process . . . which started with pressure to illustrate topical issues in a strictly representational manner and ended with the requirement to glorify Stalin" (p. 165). If in the Stalinist years the *Peredvizhniki* had been declared "the supreme model in the art of pre-socialist society," socialist realism officially termed itself "a new, sublime stage in the development of the artistic activity of mankind as a whole." This absurd claim could turn from a demagogic slogan into an element of mass consciousness only in a country that was completely fenced off from the rest of the world's culture by the wall of China and the iron curtain of Soviet ideology. This wall was largely built out of the remnants of the shattered institutions of tsarist Russia; its foundation was formed in particular by the ideas of the *Peredvizhniki*. As far back as the end of the 19th century V. Stasov had claimed that Russian art was 30 years ahead of the West,[9] and the first chapters of E. Valkenier's book contain a fair amount of material indicating that other members of the Association shared this view. Nationalistic, patriotic and anti-Westernizing ideas, as they had at the time of Alexander III, made the *Peredvizhniki* (this time in the persons of those who continued their traditions) the official artists of Russia (now Stalin's). They determined absolutely the membership and leadership of the newly revived Academy of Arts in 1947 which turned "into a watchdog over research, training and indoctrination, again setting the tenor of the country's artistic life in much the same way as it had under Nicolas I" (p. 182). It was on these ideas that Stalin's ideologists relied during the notorious Zhdanov "cultural pogroms," when they caused the heads of the living to fall in the name of late and great ones. As for the genuine, somewhat conflicting and changing views of

[9] V. Stasov, *Izbrannoe* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1950), p. 9.

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the *Peredvizhniki*, wherever they diverged from the prescribed standards, the myth-creating mechanism of ideological propaganda which Valkenier describes in part in her book went into action. Whatever offended was cut off, and things that had never been were given existence as realities, so that even P. Tretyakov, the chief collector of the *Peredvizhniki's* work, who in 1892 had presented his own Tretyakov Gallery to the city of Moscow, was transformed from a man utterly loyal to the regime, and deeply religious, into a follower of Chernyshevsky's and Herzen's ideas, while religious paintings and portraits of the tsar's family by Repin and other artists were declared simply non-existent. Myth took over from reality, and in its phantasmal glow people in Russia ceased to think it strange when Kramskoy was compared with Velasquez, and the "healthy" and "highly artistic" art of V. Makovsky and Yaroshenko was contrasted with the anti-artistic and decadent tendencies of the Impressionists and Cézanne.

In point of fact Valkenier scarcely touches on aesthetic appraisal, confining her task to an exploration of the historico-social aspect of the question. This narrows the picture slightly and, where certain details (very few) are concerned, even distorts it. For instance, it can hardly be correct to take the late works of K. Petrov-Vodkin as a typical example (and the only one in the book) of the compromise made by many Russian artists with the principles of socialist realism (p. 172). His painting "Alarm" of 1934 certainly does represent a departure from the theory of "spherical perspective" which he elaborated in the 1920s, in the direction of a more detailed technique; however, in its style and poetry it is still very far from *Peredvizhnichestvo* and socialist realism. It represents, rather, the return of a great artist to the sources of his own creativity—a path many great Russian masters were treading at the same time, including R. Falk, M. Saryan and even to some extent Malevich and Tatlin. Nevertheless, they all—Petrov-Vodkin among them—were ranked among the Formalists during the Stalin years, regardless of distinctions in style and tendency; their work was proclaimed hostile to the people and to socialist realism and condemned to total oblivion. Only in the last few years has the name of Petrov-Vodkin started to reappear in the pages of the Soviet press.

There are few such inaccuracies in the book but they in no way diminish its value as a work of scholarship. The author has made available to scholars a whole corpus of little-known historical material which sheds light on important aspects of the development of Russian culture. No less valuable is the inner historical scheme which, though nowhere deliberately expounded, follows naturally from all the factual material. What Elizabeth Valkenier explores, taking the *Peredvizhniki* as her basis, is indeed a "very Russian" phenomenon: alternating periods when Russian culture first opened up, looked to the West and thought of itself as a part of a European whole, then turned in upon itself and set itself apart from all other human culture. And, deriving from this, at the apex of Russian artistic life, the periodic recurrence of phenomena

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embodying Russian culture's national and international tendencies and the successive transformation of each from persecuted to officially approved and vice versa. Valkenier concludes her investigation with the second zenith of *Peredvizhnichestvo,* briefly touching on the beginning of their latest decline. This historical scheme could be taken further.

IN the mid-1950s we witnessed the emergence on to the stage of Russian artistic life of a new opposition movement which is now being called " Russian unofficial art." At its gnosiological sources this movement has certain similarities with the rebellion of the *Peredvizhniki* in 1863. Like the latter, the new opposition was not of a political nature and was directed not against the regime but against the stranglehold of the Academy, which had by now become such a fierce custodian of the state ideology that Elizabeth Valkenier's comparison of it with Nicholas I's Academy can be taken as a compliment. The struggle of artists for freedom of expression in the 1950s and 1960s was carried on in conditions far more difficult than a hundred years earlier. No one, for instance, prevented the *Peredvizhniki* from organizing their exhibitions all over Russia (the Association had been founded for that very purpose). And not only that: until 1875, most of their exhibitions were held within the walls of the very Academy against which the members of the artel and later of the Association were in revolt. The few exhibitions that unofficial artists have succeeded in holding a hundred years later have always taken place illegally and almost always been closed down by the authorities the moment they were discovered. The work of the *Peredvizhniki* was not regarded by the tsarist regime as an anti-government demonstration. The occasion when a jury in 1861 found V. Perov's painting " A Village Easter Procession " anti-clerical and banned it from exhibition caused a scandal, and by the next year its painter was in Paris on an Academy scholarship. Many Soviet unofficial artists have also now ended up in Paris—but with emigration visas in their pockets. However, in its artistic character the present movement is diametrically opposed to *Peredvizhnichestvo.* It aims to open up Russian culture towards the West and toward the rest of mankind's cultural heritage. In this respect it is less close to the *Peredvizhniki* than to their first opponents, the " World of Art " movement at the turn of the century.

Of course, any historical analogy, including this one, suffers from one-sidedness. Nevertheless, the contemporary phase in Soviet art somehow seems to form an entirely organic episode in the developing course of the " very Russian story " told by this gifted writer and historian.

*Translated by Hilary Sternberg*

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## Our Contributors

LUDMILLA ALEXEYEVA is the representative abroad of the Moscow Group to Promote the Implementation of the Helsinki Accord. A graduate of Moscow University, she worked as an editor for the Moscow publishing house *Nauka* and others. She comes from a family of loyal Party members. She herself was expelled from the Party after 15 years of membership in 1968 for signing a letter in defence of Ginzburg and Galanskov. Ludmilla Alexeyeva was active in the human rights movement from its beginnings in 1965, helped administer Solzhenitsyn's fund for political prisoners, contributed to *A Chronicle of Current Events,* organized the circulation of *samizdat,* and helped found the Moscow Helsinki Group in 1976. She left the Soviet Union in February 1977 and now lives in the USA.

ROBERT F. BYRNES is Distinguished Professor of History at Indiana University and author of *Antisemitism in Modern France* (1950, 1969), *Pobedonostsev: His Life and Thought* (1968), *Soviet-American Academic Exchanges, 1958–1975* (1976), and other books.

EFIM ETKIND is Professor of Russian Literature at the University of Paris (Nanterre). He was born in Leningrad in 1918 and studied Romance and German languages and literature at Leningrad University. He was a professor at the Herzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad for more than 20 years. In April 1974 he was dismissed as a dissident. He was also expelled from the Writers' Union and in October 1974 was forced into exile. His *Notes of a Non-Conspirator* has been published by Oxford University Press.

LEWIS S. FEUER is University Professor of Sociology and Humanities at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. He is the author of *The Conflict of Generations, Marx and the Intellectuals, Ideology and the Ideologists* and other works.

IGOR GOLOMSTOCK is an art historian, specializing in the art of the 19th and 20th centuries and the Renaissance. Born in 1929, he emigrated from the Soviet Union to England in 1972, and now teaches at Oxford University.

MICHAEL HELLER is *Maître-Assistant* at the Sorbonne. He is the author of *Le Monde Concentrationnaire et la Littérature Soviétique* and other works. He has contributed numerous articles to *Survey.*

RICHARD M. LEVINE is a Ph.D. candidate in Russian area studies at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. and a researcher in Soviet affairs for the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

YURI LURYI is Professor of Law at the University of Manitoba. Born in Moscow in 1920, he graduated from the Moscow Law Institute in 1947. He was a member of the Leningrad City College of Defence Lawyers from 1948–73, and participated in a wide range of civil and criminal cases all over the Soviet Union. He also worked as a lecturer, legal adviser and TV broadcaster. He was defence counsel in a number of dissidents' trials, including that of Eduard Kuznetsov.

ROBERT H. MCNEAL is a specialist in Russian history. He has studied and taught at several universities in Canada and the USA and is now at the University of Massachusetts. Among his works are a brief history of the CPSU, *The Bolshevik Tradition* and a life of Nadezhda Krupskaya. He is general editor of *Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU.*

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KAZIMIERZ MOCZARSKI: See p. 163.

VICTOR NEKRASOV was born in Kiev in 1911. He was involved in the theatre from 1937–41, took part in the war (1941–44), and worked as a journalist from 1944–47. His highly acclaimed novel *In the Trenches of Stalingrad* was published in 1946. *Native Town, Kira Georgievna, First Acquaintance, On Both Sides of the Ocean* and *A Month in France* were also published in the Soviet Union. He has lived in Paris since 1974.

ALEKSANDR M. NEKRICH is Research Fellow at the Russian Research Center, Harvard University. He graduated from Moscow University in 1941. From 1950–76 he was a senior scholar at the Institute of History (since 1968 the Institute of World History) of the USSR Academy of Sciences. He has lived in the USA since 1976. Among his books are *1941, June 22nd* (1965) and *The Punished Peoples* (1978).

GERALD POPIEL has taught sociology at the UCLA, Pratt Institute, Wisconsin State University and the City University of New York. He has published essays and articles in various journals, among them the *American Journal of Sociology, Il Politico, The Dalhousie Review* and *Wiadomosci Literackie*. He is working on a study of G. H. Mead and Jean Piaget.

TONY SHARP lectures in "The Politics of the European Settlement 1943–49" in the Department of Political Science at the University of Dundee, and is preparing a book of the same title. He is the author of *The Wartime Alliance and the Zonal Division of Germany* (Oxford University Press, 1975).

KONSTANTIN M. SIMIS left the Soviet Union in 1977. In the USSR he was a lecturer at the Higher School of Diplomacy and the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He then practised as a lawyer for 17 years, and from 1966–77 he was Senior Research Fellow at the All-Union Institute of Soviet Legislation of the Ministry of Justice.

HUGH THOMAS is an historian best known for a history of the Spanish Civil War (London, 1961 and 1977). His history of Cuba appeared in 1971 under the title of *Cuba or the Pursuit of Freedom.*

VALENTIN F. TURCHIN was born in 1931 and graduated from Moscow University as a theoretical physicist. He has written numerous papers on theoretical physics and applied mathematics, and a book on the philosophy of science: *The Phenomenon of Science* (Columbia University Press, 1977). He took part in the human rights movement in the USSR from 1968 onwards and helped found the Moscow branch of Amnesty International in 1973 and became its chairman. In 1974 he was dismissed from his work for political reasons and, unable to find employment in the USSR, emigrated in 1977. He now works at the Courant Institute for Mathematical Sciences in New York.

ARYEH L. UNGER is Senior Lecturer in Political Science at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He is the author of *The Totalitarian Party: Party and People in Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 1974).

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The main building of the original complex at No. 4, Old Square.

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The recent addition to the Central Committee offices, with adjoining auditorium.

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